



BURKE'S REFLECTIONS  
ON THE  
REVOLUTION IN FRANCE

EDITED  
WITH INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

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## PREFACE.

IN preparing this edition I have been much indebted to Mr. Morley's two Essays on Burke, and to his account of Diderot and the Encyclopædists. The description of the state of France, given in the Introduction, is based upon De Tocqueville's *L'Ancien Régime et la Révolution* and upon Arthur Young's *Travels*. I have borrowed a few explanations, and some references requiring books which I could not obtain in India, from Mr. Payne's notes upon Burke's *Reflections*. The poetical versions of the passages quoted by Burke from Horace and Virgil are taken from Dryden, Conington, and Martin.

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## INTRODUCTION.

EDMUND BURKE was born at Dublin, at the end of 1728 or the beginning of 1729. He was first elected to Parliament, as member for the borough of Wendover, at the end of 1765, the year in which George Grenville was dismissed from office. Grenville was succeeded by Lord Rockingham, the head of a party which Burke regarded as the most honest and patriotic party in the country, and which he was largely instrumental in keeping together. Rockingham remained in office for one year and twenty days. After him came the Chatham ministry. On Chatham going to the House of Lords, the Duke of Grafton led the ministry, and after him Lord North, who remained at the head of affairs for twelve years, from 1770 to 1782. The opening years of the reign of George III. were years of disturbance and difficulty. The elevation of Bute to the premiership, after the disgrace of Pitt and the dismissal of Newcastle, had produced a violent prejudice against the Scotch. Then came the troubles with America. There was, besides, the excitement caused by the affair of Wilkes. It seemed likely that the majority of the House of Commons would arrogate to itself the right of determining whom the constituencies might elect to sit as their

representatives. There were violent riots in London, provoked by the sympathy of the mob with Wilkes, and by general detestation of the arbitrary conduct of the House of Commons. Burke's view of the period, his explanation of the disorders, and the remedies which he proposed, are set forth in his pamphlet on *The Cause of the Present Discontents*, published in 1770.

Burke sat in the Parliament of 1774 as member for Bristol, of which city he continued to be the representative for six years. He made himself unpopular with his constituents by the support which he gave to the abolition of restrictions on Irish trade, and to the removal of unreasonable disabilities on Catholics. In this year he made his speech on American taxation, and in 1775 the speech on conciliation with America. In 1777 appeared his letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol on the affairs of America. It contains a characteristic defence of freedom. It is a plea for generosity and self-respect in national policy. Above all, it urges a preference of moral and utilitarian considerations to assertions of abstract rights. In 1780 matters were complicated at home by the anti-popery Gordon riots. Burke was endangered because he, as a Whig, had advocated a milder treatment of Catholics. It was in this year that he presented to the House his scheme of Economic Reform. His object was to abolish all the lucrative sinecures, by means of which the Court could corrupt the House of Commons, and turn it into a mere tool of despotism. This was Burke's substitute for those schemes of organic reform which he always opposed. In this year he lost his seat for Bristol, but was returned as member for the borough of Malton. When

Lord North's government came to an end in 1782, the Rockingham party again came into power. Notwithstanding the services which Burke had rendered to the party, he was not admitted into the Cabinet. Lord Rockingham died after three months of office. The ministry was split up. Some of them supported the claims of Shelburne, others those of Fox, who was now the head of the Rockingham section of the Whigs, to the vacant premiership. The king preferred Shelburne. It was unfortunate that the whole Whig party could not act together. We must regret that Burke rendered the party powerless by aiding to split it into two halves, and that he offered a violent and factious opposition to the ministry. The Shelburne administration fell in the spring of 1783, and Fox and Burke, to their disgrace, went over to their old enemy Lord North. A Coalition Ministry was formed, but was dismissed in December, 1783, on the rejection of Fox's India Bill. Pitt was made prime minister, and the power of the Whigs was at an end for half a century. Burke began by opposing a measure brought forward by Pitt, which was practically a proposal to give to Ireland complete commercial freedom, on condition that she paid a contribution from her surplus revenue to the Imperial Treasury. Mr. Morley points out that Burke's conduct can only be justified on the ground that Pitt's proposals "amounted to an attempt to extract revenue from Ireland, identical in purpose, principle, and probable effect with the ever memorable attempt to extract revenue from the American colonies." In 1787 he opposed Pitt's proposed treaty of commerce with France, "which enabled the subjects of both countries to reside and travel in either without license or passport, did away with all prohibitions

of trade on either side, and reduced every import duty."\* But, so far as Burke was concerned, the most remarkable event of the session was, of course, the impeachment of Warren Hastings. He opened the case in 1788, and the verdict was delivered in 1795. To the affairs of India, generally, Burke really devoted the labour of fourteen years, from 1781 to 1795.† Burke next opposed Pitt's Regency Bill, the principle of which was that the Prince of Wales could not claim to act as Regent; but that it lay with the Parliament to appoint the Regent and to define the terms on which he held office. During this period, Burke appears, by his unreasonableness, to have lost his influence in the country, and the confidence of his party and his friends. But with the French Revolution all this was changed. On this subject he was at variance with Fox from the first. In 1790 he supported the bill for the increase of the English army, and he took occasion to declare that he would not remain on terms of friendship with any one who should in any way further the introduction of a democracy like that of France. Fox expressed in the House his high sense of the value of Burke's friendship. When Sheridan dissented from the

\* Green's *Short History of the English People*, p. 772.

† "If I were to call for a reward, which I have never done, it should be for those services in which for fourteen years, without intermission, I showed the most industry, and had the least success, I mean in the affairs of India. They are those on which I value myself the most; most for the importance; most for the labour; most for the judgment; most for constancy and perseverance in the pursuit. Others may value them most for the *intention*. In that surely they are not mistaken."—*Letter to a Noble Lord*.

views expressed in Burke's speech, Burke openly broke with him. In the same year, when Fox proposed, what Burke had before advocated, namely, a repeal of the Test and Corporation Act, Burke turned round and opposed it, declaring that Dissenters were disaffected citizens. It was in November, 1790, that he published his *Reflections on the Revolution in France*. It was hailed with delight by the Crown and the Tories. In 1791 Burke openly broke with Fox on the subject of the French Revolution. In August of the same year he published his *Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs*, in which he explained and defended his views on the French Revolution, and vindicated himself against the charge of having abandoned, in his criticisms on that event, the Whig principles which he had professed through life. A few months after the publication of the *Reflections*, he had issued his *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly*, which was full of violent abuse of the Revolution and its authors. In the same letter he hinted that a European intervention in favour of the French king might become necessary. By the end of the year 1791 he had himself become convinced that it was necessary. Henceforth he devoted himself to the advocacy of war against the French, and of repressive measures at home to stop the spread of Jacobin opinions. It was the murder of the French king which roused opinion in England to sympathy with Burke. In 1794 he retired from Parliament. Arrangements were being made for creating him a peer, but, in August of that year, he was completely broken by the death of his son. The question of the peerage was dropped, and a pension was granted to him. His *Letter to a Noble Lord* is a vindication, at once spirited and



pathetic, of his right to a pension on the score of his political services. In 1795 he wrote the *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, which are, like the rest of his writings on the subject, characterized by violent hatred of all that was being done in France. The death of his son threw a profound melancholy over his closing years, and he died July 9th, 1797.

Never again, perhaps, will whatever is good in Conservatism be so thoughtfully or so attractively set forth, as it is in the pages of Burke. His *Reflections* is, at the same time, a criticism of the French Revolution and a Philosophy of Politics. There are many reasons why he failed as a critic. He did not know what the political and social system of France was. He did not know what the state of the country was. In his calmer moods he could see, quite well, that peoples do not rebel without cause, and that, in quarrels between a people and a government, the people is as likely to be right as the government. But his judgment was paralyzed by the events in France. It seemed to him that in an inexplicable fit of delirium the French had wantonly overthrown whatever good men hold sacred, whatever can make a country loveable, and a people prosperous. To Burke, who loved his land "with love far brought from out the storied past," whose love of order was so deep rooted, who looked with such awe upon all that is old and great, who had such a hatred of change, whenever change could, by any means, be avoided, the Revolution appeared to be a hideous crime and a gigantic folly. Forgetting that leaders derive what power they possess from the sympathy of those whom they lead, he regards the Revolution as the work of a few self-seeking agitators,

who lured a people by delusive promises to trust them with power, and then ruined them by their violence and their ignorance. As a matter of fact, the acts which Burke most fiercely denounces were but necessary incidents in a Revolution that was itself inevitable. The system of government and the organization of society were so closely connected that a shock to the one brought both to the ground. To understand what the Revolution was, and how it came about, it will be necessary to consider what the political and social system in France was, and to what condition the people had been reduced under it. Burke came to the subject with his mind made up. We can see that the Revolution was the uprising of an oppressed people against a system which was as unreasonable in principle as it was intolerable in practice.

Among the races which took the place of the Roman Empire in Europe, a system, substantially identical, established itself, namely, the feudal system. But the power of the feudal nobility in France had been completely broken by the middle of the seventeenth century, when Louis XIV. ascended the throne. Unfortunately, however, there was no class strong enough to share power with the sovereign, or to force him to use it for the good of the people. Power devolved solely upon the Crown. The country was administered by the officials of a centralized government. The revenues were spent by Louis XIV. upon war, and wasted by Louis XV. in debauchery. The important point, however, to bear in mind is that the feudal lords were not deprived of their privileges at the time that they were divested of their duties and responsibilities. They could still levy tolls at fairs and bridges.

They had the exclusive right of fishing and hunting. The farmer could only grind his corn at the lord's mill. The vine grower had to take his grapes to the lord's press. Every man on the lord's fief had to work for him without wages for some days in the year. When the peasant held land from the lord, the lord could dictate the mode of cultivation, and could demand certain petty and irritating dues. It was the same whether the lord was a layman or an ecclesiastic.\* These burdens were perhaps slight compared to those imposed upon the peasantry in other countries, yet the French peasantry resented them bitterly and with reason. Why, they asked, should the lord, who has no political power, be able to impose any burdens at all? Why should we be hampered on every side by men who do nothing for us? In the old feudal days it had been different. Then the lord had been the governor and, in theory at least, the protector of his vassals, and it was not unnatural that he should claim some reward for the duties which he performed.

When deprived of their powers, the nobles flocked to the court. They obtained all the high and lucrative offices in the army, the navy, and the church. The government officials were not men of noble birth. The nobility and gentry stood apart from and despised the official class. The council of the king was from the seventeenth century what the governor in council is in India. It made the laws, it organized courts of justice; it sometimes upset their decisions, it appointed officials and defined their functions, and was the final arbiter in all matters, executive, administrative, and judicial. It

\* Gardiner's *French Revolution*, pp. 4 5.

appointed the district officers, or *Intendants*, who, for the extent of their authority and the variety of their functions, may be compared to the Indian collectors. They were really the men who governed France.

The system of taxation was oppressive and unequal. The nobles and clergy were, practically, exempted from all direct taxes. "Oppressive as taxation was, owing to its weight alone, and to its unjust distribution between classes, it was rendered yet more so by want of administrative unity, by the nature of some of the taxes and the method of their assessment and collection. Internal custom houses and tolls impeded trade, gave rise to smuggling, and raised the price of all articles of food and clothing. It took three and a half months to carry goods from Provence to Normandy, which, but for delays caused by the imposition of duties, might have travelled in three weeks. Customs duties were levied with such strictness that artizans who crossed the Rhône on their way to their work had to pay on the victuals which they carried in their pockets. Excise duties were laid on articles of commonest use and consumption, such as candles, fuel, wine, and even on grain and flour. Some provinces and towns were privileged in relation to certain taxes, and as a rule it was the poorest provinces on which the heaviest burdens lay. One of the most iniquitous of the taxes was the *gabelle* or tax on salt. Of this tax, which was farmed, two-thirds of the whole were levied on a third of the kingdom. The price varied so much that the same measure which cost a few shillings in one province cost two or three pounds in another. The farmers of the tax had behind them a small army of officials for the suppression of smuggling,

as well as special courts for the punishment of those who disobeyed fiscal regulations. These regulations were minute and vexatious in the extreme. Throughout the north and centre of France, the *gabelle* was in reality a poll-tax; the sale of salt was a monopoly in the hands of the farmers; no one might use other salt than that sold by them, and it was obligatory on every person aged above seven years to purchase seven pounds yearly. This salt, however, of which the purchase was obligatory, might only be used for purely cooking purposes. If the farmer wished to salt his pig, or the fisherman his fish, they must buy additional salt, and obtain a certificate that such purchase had been made. Thousands of persons, either for inability to pay the tax, or for attempting to evade the laws of the farm, were yearly fined, imprisoned, sent to the galleys or hanged. The chief of the property taxes, the *taille*, inflicted as much suffering as the *gabelle*, and was also ruinous to agriculture. Over two-thirds of France, the *taille* was a tax on land, houses, and industry, reassessed every year not according to any fixed rate, but according to the presumed capacity of the province, the parish, and the individual tax-payers. The consequence was that, on the smallest indication of prosperity, the amount of the tax was raised, and then parish after parish, and farmer after farmer, were reduced to the same dead level of indigence." \* To this must be added that there was no effectual method of administering relief in times of distress. On the one hand, the policy of government rendered constant famine inevitable; yet, on the other hand, any attempt to give relief by fixing

\* Gardiner's *French Revolution*, pp. 9-10.

the price of provisions necessarily discouraged production and diminished the supply. Nor must it be forgotten that government helped to anger, to degrade, and to brutalize the people by the barbarous nature of the punishments inflicted under its penal code.

The towns, which from the twelfth century onwards sprang up with the growth of arts and commerce, had been largely instrumental in overthrowing feudalism. As so many centres of strength, they became rivals to the power of the feudal nobles, and gradually established themselves in practical independence. But, in France, the later kings had been driven to raise money by selling offices, or by making whole towns buy the right to elect their own municipal officers. Thus, by degrees, all public interest in municipal affairs died out, as municipal authority became centred in little local oligarchies of the higher and richer order of citizens; and, as the people ceased to interest themselves in local affairs, government became more and more able to interfere in them, until at last, in all matters of local taxation, finance, and administration, municipalities simply did what the government officials ordered them to do. Thus there was everywhere a dead uniformity of subjection to a central power even when the forms of freedom survived. In the country the subjection was, naturally, more complete. Scattered cultivators can not combine as the inhabitants of a town can. All, therefore, who could do so, flocked to the towns, and rural independence became a mere name. Whenever questions as to an act of the administration arose, they were referred not to the ordinary tribunals, but to government officials. Being the sole judges of their own acts, they

could always invent a pretext for exempting from the jurisdiction of the courts cases affecting themselves or their favourites.

Thus, by imperceptible degrees, government got all power into its own hands; and as it felt itself growing stronger, its supervision became more and more thorough, and its interference more and more minute. Absolutely nothing could be started in the country without a previous reference to government. The usual consequences followed—multiplication of statistics, of reports, and official correspondence, and a consequent paralysis of all real work and progress. The interference of non-officials became more and more intolerable to government; the growth of independent associations was regarded with ever-increasing jealousy; criticism of government officials was practically prohibited; and, as far as possible, a censorship was exercised over the press. The consequence, so far as the people was concerned, was the utter destruction of independence and self-helpfulness; a tendency to look to government for the initiative in everything, and to throw the blame on government, whenever anything went wrong. Paris was the one centre of activity and of intelligence in the kingdom. Arthur Young, an English farmer, who was travelling in France between 1787 and 1789, remarks upon the absolute ignorance of the inhabitants of the villages and country towns. There were no newspapers. People simply waited to see what Paris would say and do.

In no country in Europe were the different orders of society more completely isolated. They were like mutually exclusive castes, in juxtaposition, but never

mingling. The nobility was a caste resting on birth. There was practically no entrance to it for one not born in the order. In England, on the other hand, the nobility are not a caste, but an aristocracy associating with the people, and, above all, intermarrying with them. The word gentleman in France meant simply a man of noble birth, and its meaning admitted of no extension. Thus there was nothing to connect the nobility and gentry with the citizens and the cultivators. The unpopularity of the nobles, caused by their aristocratic exclusiveness, and their almost complete exemption from taxation, became every day greater, as the burden of taxation became heavier. The hostility between the nobles and the middle class was all the more pronounced because they lived side by side in the cities. Men flocked to the towns, because there they escaped certain taxes, and, above all, because they were not liable to have thrust upon them the odious office of collector of the property tax. When resident in the towns, they generally became candidates for appointments under government, because officials were exempted from many of the burdens which fell upon the peasantry. In this way fresh inequalities were set up between citizens and peasants. The heaviest burdens fell upon the peasantry, who naturally became discontented and jealous. Thus France, instead of being one, was split up into an infinite number of sections, each having cause to hate the rest, but no two having cause to love one another. The poor nobles hated the richer ones, and both hated and were hated by citizens and peasants. Citizens and peasants hated one another, and the citizens were divided amongst themselves. Some thought themselves better born than others : some



thought that their official rank gave them social precedence: amongst all there was jealous competition for official promotion: and all were anxious to retain in their own families lucrative offices which they had once acquired. Such being the state of the country, it is not to be wondered at that there should be a revolution, or that the overthrow of the ancient fabric should be both sudden and complete. The masses were so miserable, and so helpless, that revolution was their only remedy: there was not only no principle of social cohesion, but there were positive principles of disruption: and centralization had so weakened the extremities, that, when the centre was shaken, the whole fabric necessarily fell to pieces. It is true that, in the years immediately preceding the Revolution, the administration had been milder than before. But no mere administrative changes could remedy the evils which were inherent in the system. Small reforms, instead of appeasing the people, rendered them more impatient and more discontented than before. Measures of relief undertaken by the government necessitated ruinous loans. The inquiries instituted by government into the condition of the people served chiefly to aggravate their sense of suffering. The rejection of all proposals to tax the privileged classes irritated those on whom the burden of taxation really fell. The very impotence of the king to redress grievances, the existence of which he acknowledged, made those grievances seem more intolerable. The Intendants resented the attempts which had been made to diminish their own powers, and to turn them into presidents and advisers of local assemblies. The people were quite unfitted to take part in the adminis-

tration of their own affairs, even when they were allowed to do so, partly because of their inexperience, partly because of the impossibility of co-operation between classes who stood on such an unequal footing as the classes in France did. In spite of what Burke says, we must allow that reform was useless, and revolution inevitable.

If we would understand the condition to which the old régime had reduced the people, we must contrast the glowing pages of Burke with the more sober account of an eye-witness, Arthur Young. Burke dwells upon the wealth of the country, upon its population, and its magnificent public works. Young, in his diary for 1787, notices that there were magnificent roads, but that they were made by forced labour, or paid for by excessive taxation. Moreover, though there were fine roads, there was no traffic on them. They, therefore, served no purpose of real utility, but only proved the absurdity and oppression of the government. The property of great lords throughout the country was desert and waste. The king sometimes granted to princes of the blood a *capitainerie*, that is, the exclusive right to all the game in a district, even on land which did not belong to them. Whole droves of wild boar and herds of deer wandered at pleasure over the country, destroying the crops, and all sorts and modes of cultivation, which could in any way interfere with the well-being of the game, were absolutely forbidden. The residences of the seigneurs were generally in the midst of a forest peopled with deer, wild boar, and wolves. Oh! exclaims Young, if I was the legislator of France, I would make such great lords skip again. The fact is that the

nobles had no taste for country life and rural pursuits. They would not spend their money on the improvement of their estates, or in promoting the well-being of the peasants. The land was necessarily starved. The lords would not, and the peasants could not spend anything upon it. The peasants were content if they could get a bare subsistence. There was not, as in England, a class of capitalist farmers, sufficiently independent to make equitable bargains with their landlords. In the division of the gross produce of the soil, the landlord in France got one half. In England, he received, in the form of rent from one-fourth to one-tenth; generally between one-fourth and one-sixth. The English farmer required not only support for himself and his family, but interest on his capital; and it was his capital which gave to the land its productiveness. Speaking generally, the produce of land per acre was less in France than in England; yet, owing to the competition of peasants for land, the price of it was as high as in England. Infinite misery was caused by the universal desire to possess landed property. Land must be ill cultivated, and the national interest must suffer, when men, who by reason of their poverty ought to be working for wages, insist on cultivating land on their own account. When those who ought to be labourers become proprietors, they cannot afford to make their properties pay, and in bad seasons they are inevitably reduced to want. Besides the general unskilfulness of cultivation, and the want of capital, agriculture was hampered, as we have seen, by the oppressive and unequal system of taxation. It appeared to Young that the object in view was quite as much to keep the people poor, as to make the king

rich. The *taille*, levied arbitrarily, and raised with every increase in the farmer's wealth, seemed specially devised to put an end to profit, to success, and to merit. The farmers who were not really poor, naturally pretended to be so. Consequently, Young saw poor cattle, poor implements, and poor manure even on the farms of men who could afford the best. Even where there was capital, there was a natural unwillingness to invest it in land, "where it was, of necessity, exposed to the rapine of regal and noble harpies." The management of sheep was as unskilful as agriculture. The wool produced was poor in quality and small in amount. The consequence was that it was necessary to import for manufacture what might have been produced at home. Young calculates that the working classes received seventy-six per cent. less in France than in England. "They were to this extent worse fed, worse clothed, and worse supported both in sickness and in health than the same classes in England, notwithstanding both the immense quantity of precious metals, and the imposing appearance of wealth in France." The poor food and low wages of the labourers of course reacted unfavourably on agriculture. Overpopulation intensified the misery of the poor. Young attributes this overpopulation to the minute subdivision of landed properties. The smallest farm was regarded as affording means for married life, and there was no variety of industry to carry off the surplus population. To complete the picture, we have to add the appalling weight of feudal dues and services, and the venality and partiality of the administration of justice.

To sum up:—the rural population of France was

ignorant, isolated, oppressed, and poverty stricken. It was filled with a bitter hate against the existing system, and ready to follow any leaders who promised a happier state of things. The political inexperience of some among the revolutionary leaders, their extravagant hopes, and the folly of their political methods, which Burke satirizes, were the natural result of the situation. Hope was the natural reaction from despair; inexperience was the result of exclusion from all share of authority, and consequent absence of all opportunities of acquiring political capacity. Independence and self-help had been utterly destroyed. It was to government and its officers that the people looked to take the initiative in everything, and it was upon government that the blame of public suffering was thrown. The spirit of loyalty was by no means dead. But there was nothing left for the people but to rebel against a king who seemed to have deserted them, and against a government that appeared to be their declared and open enemy.

Arthur Young urges men to remember the grievances of the French people before condemning their excesses. His words should be remembered. "The populace in no country ever use power with moderation; excess is inherent in their aggregate constitution; and as every government in the world knows that violence infallibly attends power in such hands, it is doubly bound in common sense, and for common safety, so to conduct itself that the people may not find an interest in public confusion. They will always suffer much and long before they are effectually roused; nothing, therefore, can kindle the flame but such oppressions of some class

or order in the society as give able men the opportunity of seconding the general mass; discontent will soon diffuse itself around; and if the government takes not warning in time, it is alone answerable for all the burnings, and plunderings, and devastation, and blood that follow. The true judgment to be formed of the French Revolution must surely be gained from an attentive consideration of the evils of the old government; when these are well understood—and when the extent and universality of the oppression under which the people groaned—oppression which bore upon them from every quarter, it will scarcely be attempted to be urged that a revolution was not absolutely necessary to the welfare of the kingdom.”

So far we have dealt with the political, social, and material causes of the Revolution. It remains to consider the part which literature played in preparing the minds of men for change in the direction of democracy. The doctrines of the Economists\* were directly opposed to the principles on which French policy and institutions were based. They held that the well-being of individuals and of societies depended on the recognition of the two rights of *liberty* and *property*. The business of government according to them was simply to secure and protect these two rights. They justified property as a condition of civilization and of material prosperity; and

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\* This name is generally used to describe a body of politico-economical writers, of whom Quesnay (1694-1774) is the best known. They are sometimes described by the name of *physiocrates*, which is derived from two Greek words signifying the *rule of nature*, because they were opposed to all arbitrary interference with nature's laws.

they taught that man's pursuit of his own interest should only be limited by his natural sense of justice, which teaches him that no man may do what would be injurious to the public. Holding these opinions, they were of course opposed to the restrictive commercial policy of the French government. They were also, on economic grounds, opposed to the military spirit which had generally dictated the foreign policy of France as of other European countries. Young records in his diary for 1789 that, during the negotiations as to the manner in which the states general should sit, both Paris and the Provinces swarmed with pamphlets, republican in tone, and hostile to nobility and clergy. The cafés, he says, were crowded with listeners to seditious oratory. He noticed a general ignorance as to the principles of government, and a strange and unaccountable appeal to visionary rights of nature. The bitterness of orators and writers was aggravated by the disgusting tenacity with which the nobles clung to all their old rights, no matter how hardly they bore upon the people. Everywhere the origin of government, the principles of legislation, the natural rights of man, and the limits of authority, were being discussed. There was a general demand for what is simple and natural as opposed to what is complicated, arbitrary, or conventional. It is easy to understand how the oppressed classes in France would welcome the doctrine that men are by nature equal and free. It is curious to note that the nobles welcomed the men of letters in their houses, and amused themselves with their ingenuity, not foreseeing that their doctrines would soon be acted on by an angry people.

We need not wonder that the people were attracted by ideals of society in which all was simple, uniform, equitable, and reasonable. The Revolution in America added to the influence of speakers and writers, for the Americans seemed to have realized the ideal of philosophy. The current ideas of the time are, perhaps, best expressed in the writings of Tom Paine. He was connected with the Revolutions both of America and France: and it is with his name, rather than with that of Rousseau, that the phrase "The rights of man" is properly connected. His reply to Burke's *Reflections* is well known. Society, according to him, arose out of human wants and imperfections. When society was once formed, men were not virtuous enough to live together without control. In order, therefore, to secure freedom and safety, they were obliged to establish government, which, like dress, is the badge of lost innocence. In a small society the whole body of the members formed the Parliament, each man sitting in it by "natural right." As society and its affairs extended, government by representation was necessarily introduced, a community of interests being kept up between representatives and constituents by frequent elections. Monarchy is inconsistent with the equal rights which all possess by nature. The establishment of an hereditary monarchy is an insult and imposition on posterity. Nature denounces it by producing fools in every dynasty. Most hereditary monarchies owe their origin not to consent but to force. Kings are by their position shut out from all knowledge of their subjects, and from all community of interest with them. The subjects become mere instruments for gratifying the passions of



the monarch, or for serving family and dynastic interests. Aristocracy also violates nature. It creates titular distinctions, and so sets up conventional inequalities between man and man. To maintain these it establishes primogeniture, by which it creates unnatural and unjust distinctions between the children of the same parents. It generally leads to that monstrosity, the hereditary legislator. It sets up a privileged Church, which implies a right to dictate to the Creator what worship He shall receive. The only legitimate government is one founded on "The Rights of Man" and the authority of the people—Sovereignty is fixed by *nature* in the people. It means the right to elect representatives, and, of course, to displace them and substitute others. When the sovereignty has been wrested from the people, there is no freedom. Only the despot is free. His will is law. On the other hand, when the people is sovereign, the public good is the end of government—for every one feels that an attack on the rights of another impairs his own security. In order to determine the limits of the powers of representatives we must see what the power of the people was under the original compact. Society has no power to order or to do injustice, to break contracts, or to tyrannize over any. The representatives can pass laws, and, of course, alter them when experience shows alteration to be necessary. They also act for the state in its dealings with other states or with individuals. What they do in this capacity they cannot annul, because their acts create rights in others. The limits of authority are easily deducible from the principle that men, being born into the world with equal rights, formed societies simply to secure those natural rights.

Man, as man, has intellectual rights, and the right of acting for his own safety and happiness, wherever, by so doing, he does not violate the natural rights of others. Civil rights are those natural rights which the individual is not strong enough to maintain or secure to himself, and which, therefore, he hands over to the society. Such, for instance, is the right to redress of injury. There can, however, be no civil right which is not thus founded on a natural right. Nor has any society a right to invade those natural rights, such as freedom of judgment, which the individual retains, because, with regard to them, he stands in need of no assistance. All governments which have not grown out of, or which violate, the social compact, have their origin either in force or in fraud. Since every citizen is a member of the sovereignty, and, as such, can acknowledge no personal subjection, his obedience being only to the laws, it follows that a general revolution in the principle and construction of governments is necessary. The constitution represents the formal act by which a people creates its government and defines its power. The government, therefore, is simply the agent of the people's will. No individual or body has any right to any authority which it has not derived from the nation. One generation cannot bind the next, as the rights of each generation are the same. Republican government, which means government in the public interest, is the only government sound in principle. It will take the form of representative government, now that pure democracies, such as Greece presented, are impossible. Aristocratic and monarchical governments cannot have the knowledge, and may not have the will, to secure

the common good. In a mixed government, like that of England, the parts cover each other till responsibility is lost. Representation alone combines knowledge with power.

The National Assembly in France began with the following declaration, which had its parallel in America:—"The Representatives of the People of France, formed into a National Assembly, considering that ignorance, neglect, or contempt of human rights are the sole causes of public misfortunes and corruptions of government, have resolved to set forth in a solemn declaration these natural, imprescriptible, and inalienable rights: that the declaration being constantly present to the minds of the members of the body social, they may be ever kept attentive to their rights and to their duties: that the acts of the legislative and the executive powers of government being capable of being every moment compared with the end of political institutions, may be the more respected: and also that the future claims of the citizens, being directed by simple and incontestable principles, may always tend to the maintenance of the constitution and general happiness." These rights of men were declared to be liberty, property, security, and resistance to oppression. It follows that, men being equal in respect of these rights, civil distinctions are based solely on public utility. Sovereignty resides entirely in the people, and law must express the people's will. Only such restraints on individual liberty are justifiable as are necessary to secure equal liberty to all. Notice must be given beforehand of what are offences under the law, and of the penalties which attach to them. Penalties are to be

inflicted only when they are absolutely necessary, and resistance to the law is culpable. Opinions are not to be punished except when they disturb social order. The force of the community is to be employed for the benefit of the community. Taxation is the business of the whole community. All the agents of the community are responsible to it. No man can be deprived of his property except in cases where the law has settled that public security demands it, and on condition of a previous just indemnity.

With regard to these rights, set forth by the Assembly, and recognized by Paine as "natural," we may at once concede that they are moderate enough, and that a government which failed to enforce them would deserve condemnation. Yet it is against these doctrines of natural rights, and the deductions made from them, that Burke hurls all his thunders. This requires explanation. The ideal of 'a state of nature,' in its crude form, is a dangerous one. It may easily be made to justify license instead of liberty, and an impulsive sentimentalism, or even pure animalism, in place of the self-restraint of a formed morality. Burke, again, would say that, even if the rights asked for are legitimate, yet they are asked for on the wrong ground. We cannot, he says, tell the origin of society! It is a miraculous gift of God, designed for man's good, and, therefore to be organized, in every case, in the form which will best further that good. Expediency, rather than nature, is the proper guide for man.

When Italians, who were not Roman citizens, came to live in Rome, the Romans found it necessary, for the adjudication of suits to which they were parties,

to compile a body of law from the laws and customs of the various Italian tribes. This code was called the *ius gentium*, or law of the tribes, or nations. It was originally regarded as inferior to the civil law, to the privileges of which Roman citizens alone were entitled. Afterwards, when the Greek conception of *nature*, as embodying simplicity, uniformity, or a higher law, became powerful in Rome, it was applied to codes of law, and "natural law" was found in the *ius gentium*, which was thus raised to a position of superiority to the civil law, and came to be regarded as an ideal to which the civil law should approximate. It was called *Æquitas*, or levelling, as involving the removal of inequalities, and the introduction of simplicity and symmetry. It was a very different matter when, instead of regarding the Law of Nature as an ideal implicitly involved in actual law, men came to look upon it as a law which actually did prevail in a supposed *state of nature*. The equality, which had been regarded as the goal of actual law, was then translated into a moral condemnation of existing inequalities. Such inequalities were regarded as lapses from the perfect equality of a state of nature.\*

Burke says rightly that we cannot hear of going back to the natural man. Man, stript of all that society has made him, is at best a savage. To go back to the beginnings of government, in the literal sense of the words, is to show ourselves unmindful of what history and circumstances have made men. There is no form of government which is good for all men. Nor is there any proposition in politics which is true absolutely of all men, of all times, and of all places. The philosophy

\* Maine's *Ancient Law*, ch. 3.

which Burke opposes to the current popular opinions in France is set forth at length in the pages of the *Reflections*. It is a philosophic conservatism, more intensely conservative than it otherwise would have been, owing to his horror of the acts of the Assembly, and his fear that they might be imitated elsewhere. Throughout the book Burke has England in his mind. The briefest summary of his views may serve here. We should look forward to the goal, rather than backwards to the beginnings of social life. Society is justified by its achievements. Its beginning is wrapt in mystery. As we owe it to God, we are bound to establish and to endow a church. As the state is part of the natural order, it must be continuous. The hereditary principle, therefore, is the truly natural principle in politics. Each generation owes a duty to the next. Continuous social order, being the divinely ordained condition of human progress, each generation is bound to transmit to that which follows its inherited and acquired stock of science, morality, and art. Political changes are to be made with fear and trembling. Whatever *is*, is, in a sense, right. Order is too sacred a thing to be lightly tampered with. Obedience resting on prejudice is better than a critical and anarchic levity. For it is difficult to restore order when it has once been destroyed. Men are not lay-figures to be arranged and rearranged at will. They are beings of pronounced intellectual and moral habits, with definite tendencies, which are the results of their history. To these habits and tendencies the political organization must be fitted. It shows entire ignorance of the limitations which the nature of things imposes upon statesmanship to suppose that symmetry and logical complete-

ness and consistency are the tests of a good constitution. It is folly to talk of going back to the state of nature, and making a fresh start. Even if it were possible to do so, there is no obligation to do it. Society is not a mere trade-partnership which can be dissolved at will. When society was constituted, the state of nature was abandoned. All talk, therefore, of rights of nature is irrelevant. If men, for their own advantage, exchanged the state of nature for the state of society, they left the state of nature and all its rights behind them. The only rights which they could thenceforth possess were civil rights, that is, the advantages of social life. All talk about absolute freedom and equality became thenceforth nonsense. If, as is said, men have contracted to live in society, they have agreed to so much surrender of their freedom and equality as is necessary to make society possible. Equality of restraint is the only equality of which they can any longer reasonably talk. Hence we get a justification of different orders and ranks in society. For the only question, which can reasonably be asked is, what organization of society is the best? what form of society and government tends most to the growth of virtue, and to the increase of happiness?

It is not to be supposed that the critical and sceptical literature, which induced, and determined the character of the French Revolution, was a sudden growth or was confined to France. We must trace the democratic spirit in literature from the time of the Reformation. From the day when the rights of reason as against authority were asserted and allowed in the sphere of religious belief, it was certain that reason could not long be fettered in other spheres. Men would claim the right

to justify to themselves the principles in which they were asked to acquiesce, the codes to which they were asked to conform, and the governments which they were required to obey. Of what can I be certain? was the question raised by Descartes, the first philosopher of our modern era: and it is a question which men have been asking and answering ever since. With questions of science we are only indirectly concerned. Politics and religion are of primary importance. The progressive advancement of science in the closing years of the sixteenth and in the seventeenth century naturally induced a habit of looking for a positive explanation of everything in experience. French writers of the eighteenth century were profoundly influenced by Bacon and Locke. From the first they derived, above all things, encouragement to persevere in the attempt to solve the problems of man and the universe—to turn their inquiries to account for the relief of man's estate, and by both they were taught to limit themselves to the evidence of experience, to the exclusion of all *a priori* principles and beliefs. "Locke alone," says Voltaire, "has traced the progress of the human understanding in a book which contains nothing but truths; and what makes the book perfect is that all the truths are clear." Of the writers who influenced French thought all were admirers of English institutions, and some had resided in England. What struck Voltaire in England was the general toleration of opinions. Montesquieu declared that the English constitution was contrived to secure freedom to those who lived under it. Rousseau, to a large extent, repeats the political doctrines of Locke. Locke was the exponent of the principles of 1688. His treatise is based on the



first book of the *Ecclesiastical Polity* of Hooker, which was published about 1594. Locke and Rousseau were both opponents of absolutism. They both mention Hobbes by name, and repudiate his doctrine.

As man's knowledge of the world widened, and the diversity of institutions, laws, and customs was brought to view, it was not unnatural that the opinion should gain ground that government and law are mere matters of convention. The sceptical Montaigne\* seems to take pleasure in emphasizing the variety and the arbitrariness of law and custom. It was the object of Hooker to show that there is a law prior to and independent of convention, and to give to political society a foundation in nature and in reason. Hooker in large measure repeats Aristotle. Man, he says, is by nature social. Society which, in the first instance, provides for the satisfaction of man's physical and material wants, serves also the higher purpose of rendering possible his perfection in virtue. "Men were naturally induced to seek communion and fellowship with others to supply the defects and imperfections which are in men living singly by themselves." But before the establishment of government and the promulgation of laws men were subjected to the law of nature or reason. Their reason revealed to them the legitimacy of self-defence, and the right of each man to freedom, limited only by the same right in others. In time experience showed that existence, without a supreme coercive power, produced endless strife and troubles, because each man was judge in his own cause. As, therefore, there was nothing to give to any one man, as such, authority over any other men.

\* 1533-1592.

agreed to submit to a government. Nothing but his own consent can subject a man to authority or law. In the laws of countries, besides the law of nature which they enforce, there is also a positive or conventional element, which, naturally, varies from country to country according to the special needs of time and place. The state, therefore, is justified, because it is the condition of human well-being. It is not the negation of freedom, but the security for it. By its authority it enforces the impartial administration of laws, which represent, directly or by implication, the will of the community. There is no single form of government which is legitimate to the exclusion of others. The only reason why monarchy may have come first is that the first communities would naturally elect to be governed in the mode with which family life had familiarized them.

Hobbes,\* who wrote to justify the absolutism of the Stuarts, declared that the state of nature was a state of war. Every man was the enemy of every other man. Men knew no law but that of their own passions. When the inconveniences of this state of war became manifest, men agreed to make a surrender of some of their natural rights, thinking that, if they all submitted to be governed, they would be more secure in the possession of those natural rights which they retained. Society was formed by a compact, by the terms of which they were bound to obey a sovereign. The power of the sovereign was absolute. Distinctions of right and wrong were first created when government was instituted. In opposition to this theory, as well as to the doctrine that kings rule by divine right,

\* 1588-1679.

Locke's treatises on *Civil Government* were written. In the state of nature, according to him, all men were equal. In other words, until men have consented to be governed, there is nothing which gives to any one man a right to govern any other. They were also free, except in so far as they were bound by the law of nature which was revealed to them by their reason, as soon as they came to man's estate. During their minority they were rightly governed by their parents. Locke, like Hooker, says that the rule of the father in the family suggested monarchy as the first form of government. But he denies that there is any foundation either in reason or experience for Hobbes's theory of absolutism. The father's rule was over minors and ceased with minority. From the fact that men in the state of nature were equal, it is deducible that each was bound not to harm another in his life, health, liberty, or possessions. All were free to enforce this law, and to punish transgression of it so far as might serve "for reparation or restraint." It was with a view to securing impartial and effective justice that individuals agreed to hand over the enforcement of their rights to the community, which then proceeded to elect a government. Thus the power of government is not absolute. It is a trust, or, as Locke calls it, a fiduciary power. The people ~~recede~~ their sovereignty, after the institution of government; but this sovereignty is in abeyance. The powers of government are limited by the end for which it was established, namely, the enforcement of natural rights. When it violates these, it transgresses the terms of its trust, and puts itself in a state of war against the people, who are justified in overthrowing

it. Thus the ultimate justification of the state is that it not only does not destroy the freedom of the individual, but that it secures to all equal justice and safety. Political society begins when each entrusts to the community the task of securing and protecting his natural rights, and "the liberty of man in society is to be under no other legislative power but that established by consent in the commonwealth, nor under the dominion of any will, or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact according to the trust put in it." Such was the Whig doctrine of the seventeenth century. We may now proceed to consider the opinions of Rousseau.\* He is such a prominent figure in history that it is desirable to state at length the substance of his three chief political treatises. The earliest in point of time is an answer to the question whether the re-establishment of the sciences and the arts has contributed to the purification of morals.

With the development of arts and letters, he says, comes politeness, politeness involves affectation, affectation involves insincerity, and insincerity involves crime. The luxury which is born of the arts is unfavourable to the existence of that robust virtue, which is practised when the conditions of life are more simple. Theories as to the origin and nature of virtue weaken its practical hold on man. The actual duties of life are sufficient to fill each man's life. Sciences spring from and abet the worst elements in human nature. They confirm the idleness in which they arise. History shows how cultured and, therefore, luxurious and corrupt nations have fallen before the arms of poor and un-

\* Born 1712.

lettered peoples. The Goths, when they conquered Greece, left it its libraries, because a race of students could never be dangerous. The revival of letters seems to have killed the recovered manliness of Italy. With such a revival, talent takes the place of worth in public esteem, and show is preferred to utility. This corruption of the public taste is fatal to the growth of honest minds. The innocence of uninstructed poverty is no more to be seen. There have arisen great teachers of the human race; but such men have not been admitted, as they should have been, into the councils of rulers. Their admission would stimulate the endeavours of the sage, at the same time that it enlightened the policy of princes. Knowledge and power would then co-operate for the happiness of man. So long, however, as power stands by itself on one side, and enlightenment and wisdom by themselves on the other, the wise will seldom think great things, princes will still more seldom do good things, and the people will continue to be contemptible, corrupted, and unhappy.

It is manifestly unfair to represent this as an assertion that ignorance is preferable to knowledge. The conclusion of the whole reminds us of Plato's assertion that states will not prosper until kings shall be philosophers or philosophers kings. There is nothing paradoxical in the assertion that governments should be directed by wisdom. There is nothing paradoxical in the argument that a partial culture produces undesirable results. It is in the business of life and the duties of citizenship that manliness of character and robust morality are developed. There is, therefore, not only real use, but plain common sense in a protest against

the dangers of a life devoted solely to artistic culture and the elegancies of refined society. To say nothing of the actual effects of the Renaissance, French society, as it is depicted for us in the *Lettres Persanes* of Montesquieu, might alone justify such a protest as that of Rousseau, on account of its levity, its heartlessness, its frivolity, its indifference, and its scepticism.

Rousseau's next treatise deals with the origin and foundation of the inequalities which exist among men. His object here is to strip off, so far as possible, all the customs, institutions, habits, feelings, and ideas, which in the long course of social life, have taken possession of man, and, either by association, conviction, or force, have become so deeply rooted in his nature. He hoped in this way to arrive at the sentiments which are really natural and primitive, and from them to deduce the natural or justifiable type of society and of law. He wanted to get behind whatever was arbitrary and accidental. The treatise was written as an answer to the question—What is the origin of the inequality amongst men, and is it justifiable by the law of nature? The great mistake, he says, of writers on the origin of society has been that they explain it by crediting men, in a supposed state of nature, with ideas which are only possible to men living in a state of society. He begins with a sketch of what savage life may be conceived to have been. Physically, man was active, strong, and healthy. The simplicity of his life, the fewness of his wants, the necessity of providing for himself, the alertness developed by the constant habit of self-defence—all these aided his physical development. So far there is no difference between man and an animal. Man,

however, differs from the animals, firstly, in his power of free choice ; secondly, in his capacity of perfectibility, that is, of imagining and realizing a better state of himself. At first, there would be nothing to stimulate his mental and moral capacities. Want arouses passion, passion stimulates ingenuity to gratify it, and ingenuity, in turn, excites passion by suggesting new gratifications. But in the simple solitary life of the savage there was no want, and, therefore, no passion, and, consequently, no stimulus to the intellect. When Hobbes represents every man as at war with his neighbour in the state of nature, he forgets that the savage properly has no neighbour, that his passions are undeveloped, and that passion, so far as it exists, is modified by the animal instinct of pity. This sentiment of pity was an effective restraining force prior to law. Prior to law, too, resentment was not aggravated by the sense of injustice, injury, and wrong. There were no disputes about property. Disputes about women would be few. For physical desire was not, as now, complicated by sentimental attachments and imaginative preferences for one woman rather than another. The satisfaction of the physical want was all men thought of. In their declamations against the evils and miseries of the savage state men have not made sufficient allowance for the misery, the disputes, and the crimes, which have sprung from our artificial social codes. In the savage state there are few inequalities, or none. All live on the same food, live in the same manner, and do the same things. Differences of nurture and education at once introduce new inequalities, besides strengthening any which exist naturally.

Tender nurture augments bodily delicacy and the feebleness which it implies. Mastership cannot be established amongst men who live in isolation, who are fixed to no spot by family or possessions, and who are connected by no mutual wants or services. We must look for the circumstances which have rendered possible the development of man's spiritual capacities, and which, by so doing, have made him wicked at the same time that they have made him a social being.

The reader will notice that this is not to be interpreted literally as a historical sketch. It is merely a description of what artificial life and sentiments have done or may be supposed to have done. What Rousseau has in his mind is that, before we can say what can be made of man, or what treatment of man is reasonable and justifiable, we must distinguish what is natural and, therefore, necessary from what is merely accidental in his ideas and in his condition.

Civil society began with appropriation ; and with it began crimes, wars, murders, miseries, and horrors. The idea of property, however, did not arise suddenly. The progress from the purely animal to the reflective state was gradual. It was only by degrees that the hard struggle for existence sharpened men's wits so that they could secure for themselves more extended comforts. When huts were first made, there came a beginning of family life and of property. This would lead to the growth of domestic sentiments, to an elementary differentiation of the employments of the sexes, and to an increased power of combination and co-operation. With comfort came enervation of body and mind. The



possession of comforts, which soon become necessities, is the beginning of discontent. Further, common life would involve language. A common life and abode would introduce a common type of manners and of character. Singing and dancing would be the first amusements of the community. There would be a competition to please. Thus would arise the first inequalities, bringing with them the evil passions of pride, contempt, and jealousy. The sense of personal worth would arise. A code of polite manners would follow, of course, with its long train of quarrels and revenges. Yet this simple social life probably represents the happiest period of the human race. There was none of that personal dependence of man upon man which came in with the invention of the arts. So soon as one man had need of the help of another, and so soon as men perceived that it was advantageous to one to have the means of maintaining two, equality disappeared, property began, labour became necessary, the forests were changed into smiling fields which had to be watered with the sweat of men. Slavery and misery soon appeared, and grew with the harvests. This revolution was due to the invention of the arts of working in metal and of agriculture. Cultivation implied possession. For property rests on the right to the fruits of labour. Property, again, rendered rules of justice necessary. Inequalities of profit now followed fast upon natural inequalities of skill, strength, and industry. Man's chief capabilities of intellect and character were now developed, or were in process of development. The natural consequences of this new social stage were competition and rivalry, opposition of

interests, and, always and everywhere, the secret desire to gain at the expense of others. Each man standing in need of each, men would command and tyrannize when they could, and, when they could not, they would try to succeed by affecting kindness and consideration for others, by small favours and concessions, and by all the artifices of deceit. When all the land was appropriated, the poor and feeble could only live by serving the rich and powerful. Hence came slavery, and the love of conquest, leading to constant war and injustice. Might was right. Still, in this condition, the possessions of the rich were precarious. They had to defend them alone, and at their own expense, against attack. Jealousy prevented union. So they said to the poor—Let us submit to social control, and to laws, which, while protecting all equally, shall impose equal duties upon all. It was well worth the while of the rich thus to sacrifice a part of their liberty in order to secure the rest. The people ran to meet their chains, under the idea that they were assuring their liberty. It was in this way that society and laws originated. They placed new fetters upon the weak, and added to the strength of the rich. They destroyed irrevocably natural liberty. They fixed for ever the law of inequality of property. They turned a skilful usurpation into an inalienable right, and, for the profit of the ambitious few, they subjected the human race, thenceforth, to labour, servitude, and misery. In order to resist a society once formed, the rest of the world had to form similar societies. Thus there is not a corner of the world in which the social yoke can be escaped. The rights and laws of nature, so far as they can be said to survive, do

so only in international relations. Hence came all the horrors of wars between nations. For the state of nature was as inconvenient to nations as it had previously been to individuals. Society, at first, rested only on a few simple conventions, for the enforcement of which the community was responsible. It was only when the inadequacy of such an arrangement was discovered by experience that men submitted, as a last mode of self-defence and safety, to political authorities and leaders. The first contract was not a contract to obey a despot. It is absurd to suppose that men would barter away their lives and liberties, as Hobbes supposes. Locke is quite right when he says that men have no power to barter away their own lives, and that the natural authority of a father can in no way be made to justify an absolute power over life, liberty, and property. The real contract was between the community and the chief. The latter bound himself to enforce the general will, which was law on all social matters, including his own position and power, and in return he received compensating honours and privileges. Inequality amongst men was consummated when rulers were enabled by circumstances to make their power absolute and hereditary. Civil distinctions follow necessarily upon political. The same passions which rendered political control necessary, also cause a perpetual rivalry and competition for the objects which are valued in society. Rulers find it easier to command those amongst whom they can create jealousies and dissensions. When despotism has at last reared itself upon the weaknesses and divisions of society, the wheel has come full circle. Another state of nature has

arisen. Men are equal once more, but equal in insignificance and impotence. The social contract has been broken. Might has again become right. The despot rules by force, and force may be employed to overthrow him.

The sum of the whole is that social life alters the nature of man, and, consequently, his aims and position, by the new passions which it creates. Above all it destroys that indifference to everything but his own freedom, which is the characteristic of the natural man. Man in society is marked by deceit and levity in his conduct and demeanour; he is clever without wisdom; honour takes the place of virtue; amid all his pleasures he finds no happiness. Inequality, which, in the state of nature, hardly exists, acquires its force and increasing development from our capabilities and from the progress of the human mind. It becomes finally established and legitimized by the establishment of property and laws. But inequalities authorized by positive law are opposed to natural rights, wherever they are not parallel with natural inequalities. It is manifestly contrary to the law of nature, however we may define it, that a child should command an old man, that an imbecile should direct a sage, and that a handful of men should be gorged with superfluities, while the multitude starve for want of necessities.

In the *Republic* of Plato, a sophist, named Thrasymachus, is made to maintain the thesis that justice is the interest of the strongest. In stating that governments rest solely on force, and that laws are simply commands which the stronger, for their own benefit, compel the weaker to obey, Thrasymachus was stating

## INTRODUCTION.

the simple truth about the governments and the laws of many of the states of Greece. Similarly Rousseau's treatise is a fierce and not undeserved satire on the societies of his day. Feudalism was the consecration of might; and the powers of feudal lords, whether lay or ecclesiastical, were exercised in France, simply for the benefit of those who possessed them. The power of the crown had been used for the aggrandisement of the monarch. The people were sunk in hopeless misery. The rights of the poor, the inequalities of wealth, the duties of property, the equalization of burdens, the abolition of privileges, the possibility of securing to all men a more equal start in the race of life—these are questions which perplex the statesman and the moralist in every modern community, and Rousseau was right to call attention to them. When we consider the state of the masses in France, need we wonder if Rousseau declared in his wrath that civilization was not worth the price that was paid for it?

The sting of Rousseau's words lay in the truth of them. Such passionate outcries as his are the natural birth of ages of oppression. We ourselves are apt to be impatient when we think how much there is that is unreasonable in our political and social arrangements, when we contemplate the pride of wealth and power, the hollowness and insincerity of the world, the selfishness that is born of competition, the divergence between the code of honour and the law of virtue, the vulgar worship of wealth and position, the degradation of the lower classes and the luxury of the higher. We are inclined to cry out for a state of society which shall be more simple, more equitable, more rational!

natural. But with us, in spite of all drawbacks, there is a clear surplus of good over evil. There is a prospect of reform. We have recognized modes of forcing attention to our wishes and compelling satisfaction of our desires. But what had time brought to the masses of France? Nothing. Rousseau's words fell like a spark on inflammable matter. They produced a fierce hostility against those oppressive inequalities which, as he taught, had no foundation either in nature or reason.

The last of Rousseau's treatises, which we have to consider, is the famous treatise on the *Social Contract*. It is an attempt to determine the basis of legitimate government. Such an attempt was necessary because men are born free. Mere force can neither give a right to govern, nor create a duty to obey. Obedience to superior force is a necessity, and this necessity ceases when the balance of power is changed. Nor does nature give to any man authority over others. Legitimate authority, therefore, must rest upon convention. We cannot argue, as Hobbes does, that the people can surrender themselves to a king, and that the king, from such act of surrender, derives a despotic authority. This theory presupposes a people already organized and working in concert: it does not explain how the people became a people, governing themselves by a vote of the whole or of the majority.

In the state of nature a period arrived when the forces, by which the safety of the individual was threatened, were too strong for the resistance which he could oppose to them. The only remedy was to unite the forces of all under a single direction. Yet, on the

other hand, there was the danger that the individual, in connecting himself with others, might lose the power and the freedom to protect himself. The problem, therefore, was to discover a form of association which should defend and protect, with the whole force of the community, the person and the property of each member; and under which each, while uniting himself to all, might still only obey himself, and remain as free as before. This was the difficulty which the *Social Contract* solved. For, in the first place, as all alike make a total surrender of themselves to the community, all are on the same footing. All are equal in position. Further, the surrender by each man of himself to the community is complete. No individual has any rights which he can claim to assert or vindicate of himself. There is, therefore, no principle of disunion in the community. Lastly, no individual surrenders himself to another individual, but to the community. There is, therefore, an accession of strength to each, unaccompanied by personal subjection. The essence of the contract, in fact, is this—"Each of us puts in common his person and all his power under the supreme direction of the general will: and, further, we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole." By this act a corporate body, state, or people, is substituted for a mere aggregate of individuals. The body thus formed is *sovereign*: and, as it consists of the individuals, it can have no interest opposed to theirs. But an individual may have, or may think that he has interests opposed to the general will. In such case *the sovereign* may compel obedience on the principle which gives to the sovereign a legitimate authority, viz., that the social

contract secures to the individual freedom from personal dependence upon individuals. The gain to the individual from the substitution of social life for the state of nature may be summed up thus—"He becomes a moral agent instead of a mere animal. He gains freedom, that is, obedience to a self-imposed law of reason, in place of subjection to appetite. For the right to whatever he can acquire is substituted civil freedom, and property resting on positive title instead of on mere force and the right of the first occupant. Further, his faculties are practised and developed, his ideas are widened, his thoughts and feelings are ennobled, and, instead of being a dull limited animal, he becomes an intelligent being and a man."

The sovereignty of the people is inalienable, because the social pact implies the direction of the state by the general will for the general good. It is also indivisible, for an act of sovereignty, or a law, must express the will of the whole. Particular acts of magistrates, whether executive or judicial, and decrees which affect only a part of the community, are not acts of sovereignty, but mere applications of laws in particular instances. The general will is always right. Its object is the general interest. The danger to be guarded against is the formation of powerful parties in the state, with interests of their own, which may override the general will. The sovereign body is supreme over the members in all matters affecting the common good, and is itself judge of what is for the common good. But in this there is no servitude. For the essence of the social contract is that the interests of the individual are identical with those of the community. In working for others, there-



fore, the individual works for himself. It is from this principle that laws derive their right. They are not commands imposed by some upon others. They are simply so many agreements, made by the members of the community, to submit themselves to the same conditions and obligations. Their power springs from this, that all are interested in maintaining their own decisions, and that no man feels himself oppressed in abiding by his own decisions. In the benefits of social life man gets more than an equivalent for any natural privileges which he may have surrendered. The interests of the state which he obeys are his own interests. He gets the protection of the power of the state. The laws are simply the conditions of civil association determined by the members of the community. But the question arises, how are these to be properly settled? Though the general will is for the general good, it does not necessarily know what is for the general good. Just as it is necessary to compel individuals to submit their will to their reason, that is, to will the public good which they see and understand, so it is necessary to enlighten the public. Hence the need of a legislator. Legislation is theoretically complete when the individuality of each citizen is completely merged in that of the state, and when the force of the community is equal or superior to the natural forces of the individuals who compose it. In fact, the ideal state is one in which the individual lives in, and through, and for the state, while the protection which the state affords him is complete. As by the terms of the contract the people cannot be subjected except to self-imposed laws, the first legislators must not have the power of enforcing their own laws. As, in the

beginning of states, it is difficult to get a people, not yet habituated to obedience, to see the advantages of obedience, legislators have generally secured obedience to their laws by representing them as of divine origin. Still the mere invocation of a deity is not sufficient. Only genius can form a state. The laws must be relative to the state of the people. Theoretically perfect laws are of no avail when a people is brutalized by habit, or degraded by a long period of willing servitude. The size of the state also deserves consideration. It must be large enough to protect itself in independence, but not too large to be one state, nor too large for effective, economical, and beneficent government. The population should not be too large for the soil, yet it should be large enough to occupy the territory. Differences of situation and climate have a necessary bearing on the question of territory and population. A period of peace, too, is necessary for the growth and development of a political system.

The objects of legislation should be liberty and equality: *liberty*, because the dependence of individuals upon individuals is so much withdrawn from the strength of the state; *equality*, because it is the necessary condition of liberty. By equality, however, is not meant a universal sameness of rank and wealth. By equality is meant that rank shall be subject to law, and that, in the matter of wealth, none shall be rich enough to buy another, and none so poor as to be forced to sell himself to another. The aim of the legislator should be to limit the possessions of the wealthy and the covetousness of the poor. The political and economical organization of a people must be regulated entirely by

circumstances. Laws will be powerless if they are opposed to the natural requirements and temper of the people. Under the general head of law are comprised (1) the constitution; (2) the civil laws, determining the relation of individuals to the state and to one another; (3) the criminal laws, which are not so much special laws as the sanction of the rest; and (4), what really gives their force and effect to all the rest—manners, customs, and opinions.

Before considering the form of *government*, it is necessary to fix the meaning of the term. Government is the executive of the sovereign people, appointed to execute the commands of the people, namely, the laws, and is removable at will. Government does not owe its existence to contract. It is settled provisionally by a law of the sovereign people. Different forms of government are desirable in different circumstances. The more concentrated a government is, the stronger it is; and the more numerous the people, the stronger should be the government. The danger is that the stronger will of a centralized government may be opposed to the general will or to the public good. We may say in the abstract that democracy is suited to small states, aristocracy to moderate sized states, and monarchy to large states. But this is only to be regarded as a general statement. It is to be remembered that each of these three forms admits of many modifications, and that one form may pass into another. Democracy has many dangers. It is deficient in promptness and rapidity of action; and in it, especially, power is likely to drift into the hands of leisured cliques. An elective aristocracy would seem to combine the maximum of efficiency with

the maximum of public spirit. Monarchy is unsafe, because the temptations to a selfish misuse of absolute power are so great. Mixed forms of government, that is, modifications of the three simple forms, have been devised with a view to keeping the government in due dependence on the sovereign. Organized communities are possible only when, after supplying the wants of individuals, a surplus remains for public expenses. Monarchy and aristocracy are more expensive than democracy. This is to be taken into account in considering what form of government is best for a given country. Governments degenerate because they usurp the functions of the sovereign people. Since laws are the expression of the will of the sovereign people, provision should be made by law for frequent meetings of the people. The stronger the government is, the more frequently should the sovereign people show itself. When the sovereign people assembles, the powers of the government, its delegate, are in abeyance. Frequent assemblies, therefore, being a check upon governments, are a protection to the body politic. The weakness of states comes from this, that people, instead of performing their civic duties themselves, prefer to pay to have them done by deputy. Public spirit is the life of the state. Sovereignty cannot be alienated. The people, therefore, cannot be represented. It is only during the period of elections that the English people are free. The moment the people allows itself to be represented, it ceases to be free. If liberty is to be preserved, states must be small, for liberty implies meetings of the whole people. Meetings of the sovereign people should open with these two questions—(1) Is the sovereign pleased

to continue the existing form of government? (2) Is the people pleased to continue the administration in the hands of those who are at present charged with it? It is by the approach to unanimity in popular assemblies that we are to judge of the predominance of the general will over particular interests. When patriotism and public spirit are strong, the state is moved by one will. The public interest is not generally hard to discern, if we will look for it. Nor is it generally hard to secure, if individuals are willing to sacrifice their own interests to it. The only law which necessarily requires a unanimous vote is the Social Contract itself. For no man can limit the natural freedom of another. When the state is formed, residence in the territory is to be regarded as a virtual recognition of the sovereignty of the state. All subsequent regulations, passed by the majority, are binding on all, because they express the general will. The minority, therefore, suffers no loss of freedom. They vote against a measure only because they are mistaken as to the general will. The larger the majority is, the greater is the chance that the minority is mistaken.

Nothing so much weakens the state as the rival dominion which priests try to set up. This divides men's interests, and divorces piety from good citizenship. The pure religion of the gospel, excellent as it is, affords no life or strength to the state. One of its main commands is obedience. Its goal is spiritual perfection. It is utterly indifferent to the affairs of this world. The citizenship of the Christian is in heaven. The power of the sovereign in the matter of religion is limited, as it is in all matters, to enforcing what is for the public good.

There are certain "sentiments of sociability" which all, who are capable of being good citizens, must believe in. They are, the belief in the existence of a powerful, intelligent, beneficent, divinity and providence, in the life to come, in the happiness of the just, and the punishment of the wicked, and in the sanctity of the social contract and of the laws. Whoever denies any of these principles must be banished from the state, not as irreligious, but as unsociable, that is, as incapable of being sincerely attached to the laws and to justice, and of sacrificing his life, in case of need, for duty's sake. All religions, the dogmas of which contain nothing which is incompatible with civic duties, are to be tolerated. The existence of a church, which proclaims that salvation is only possible to those who accept its creed, is impossible except when ecclesiastical is to be substituted for civil rule.

With regard to these treatises of Rousseau, as with regard to those of Locke and Hooker, it is easy to point out difficulties of detail. There is the difficulty of securing the freedom of minorities. It is only by a fiction that the present generation can be said to have consented to the unrepealed acts of past generations, or that mere residence in a country can be said to imply acquiescence in the acts and orders of the government of that country. Strictly speaking, Rousseau's principles would demand the establishment of small self-governing communities, or of federations of such communities, in place of the existing nations and empires. Still all the treatises are valuable because they insist that the state rests, not upon force, but upon principles essentially rational. The state, according to Rousseau,

combines, or ought to combine, safety with freedom. The ideal state is one in which public interests are directed by a well-informed public will. It is especially to be noticed that Rousseau is not properly chargeable with enunciating abstract propositions about rights of men and forms of government. He asserts, what we should all allow, that might is not right. In his view, quite as much as in that of Burke, the state is justified by what it does for the individual; and he insists, quite as strongly as Burke, that the form of government must be relative to the circumstances of a country, and to the needs of a people. That his doctrines were revolutionary need not be disputed. The immediate practical deduction from them was that the French government had no right to exist. But if we justify Locke and the Revolution of 1688, it is hard to see why we should condemn Rousseau and the Revolution of 1790. The truth is that speculations, such as those of Rousseau, have been common enough in history. They do not produce revolutions, except when they are addressed to a people who are already ripe for revolution. What is truly admirable in Rousseau's political writings is his sympathy with man as man. To such sympathy governments and privileged classes can never be too sensitive. In France it did not exist. Rousseau's humanitarianism ought to have exacted a tribute of respect from one who devoted so much time and labour to the championship of the oppressed in India, and to the advocacy of the cause of the young communities of America in their rightful struggle for freedom.

As yet we have said nothing of the church. Yet the attack upon the church, and the general hostility to

religion, or at least to theology, are prominent features of the Revolution. We must remember, in the first instance, that the church occupied a privileged position in the matter both of property and political power. The most lucrative offices in it were held by men of noble birth who enjoyed the same privileges, in exemption from taxation, that the lay nobles did. The clergy were large landed proprietors, and as such the same odium fell upon them which fell upon the lay nobility. Many of the highest ecclesiastics were notoriously men of profligate lives. They took part in, instead of denouncing, the debauchery of the court. The spirit of Catholicism was in direct hostility to the spirit of the age. The Catholic church rests upon tradition and authority. It had always been, when it had the power, a persecuting body. It still did what it could to stop the free prosecution of inquiry, and the diffusion of sceptical opinions. Amongst those who led the attack upon the church and upon theology by far the most prominent man was Voltaire.\* He was a man who knew exactly how to catch the ear of the public. He was, too, always before the world. He was a man of great ingenuity and keen wit. His favourite weapon was ridicule. He was impatient of the intolerance of the church, and disgusted by the frivolousness of the questions and controversies by which it had disturbed the peace of the world. His humanity revolted at the sight of suffering. He was opposed to the church because it divided men's loyalty with the state. He rejected the evidences of revelation. He was convinced, like most men of his time, that man's

\* Born 1694, died 1788.



lot could be most effectively and speedily improved by a diffusion of knowledge; and he was just the man to put facts in a popular way. His versatility is proved by the extent and variety of his writings. He is not deep, but he is quick to seize a point. He is always luminous. He is skilful in arrangement. Above all he is never dull. The clever and pointed raillery of a polished man of the world pervades his pages. He brought the whole artillery of his wit to bear upon the Catholic system of dogma, and so popularized scepticism. Dogmas, of course, have a history and a meaning which the mere letter of them does not express; and, in religious experience, there must always be much which cannot be comprehended within the formulæ of the ordinary logic. But the favourite weapon of criticism in the eighteenth century was an appeal to "common sense"; and this was a weapon in the use of which Voltaire was a master. In a country, like France, where everything seemed founded on unreason, we need not wonder at the success of his attack. There can, of course, be no reconciliation between the church and Voltaire. However ready intelligent theologians may be to allow that the progress of knowledge has made it necessary to reconsider many of the positions of theology, still they must always reject the ultimate principles of Voltaire, and hate the spirit in which his attack was made. That much of his criticism was justifiable, that the church had in great measure provoked the attack, and that he honestly and successfully devoted himself to the diffusion of general enlightenment, are propositions which can hardly be denied. Voltaire gave expression to the scepticism which had

long permeated educated society. In 1721, Montesquieu published his *Lettres Persanes*. The book is a criticism on the state of France in the form of letters supposed to be written to their friends by Persian travellers in France. The ridicule of church and priests is undisguised. The absurdity of Catholic dogmas, the ignorance, intolerance, idleness, and avarice of the priests, the pride of theological disputants, the infinity of controversies about trifles, the ingenuity and immorality of casuists, the evils of celibacy, are all held up to contempt. Nor is it the church alone which is criticized. The government of Louis XIV. is compared to an oriental despotism. The hostility of the different orders of society is dwelt upon. The complexities and inconsistencies of the system of law are emphasized. The idleness and frivolity of the nobles are exposed and contrasted with the misery of the starving masses.

The most fatal blow to the pretensions of theology was the publication of the *Encyclopædia*. The successive volumes of this famous work were issued, under the superintendence of Diderot and D'Alembert, between the years 1751 and 1772. It was not merely a summary of useful knowledge. The authors, indeed, spared no pains to make it a complete and accurate exposition of all that was known with regard to science, arts, and manufactures. But it was also intended to be a general picture of the efforts of the human spirit in every field, in every age. It was a philosophy of man and of society. It was by the positive and scientific character of its articles that it undermined the supernaturalism, the mysticism, and the traditions of the church.

Montesquieu, by the publication in 1748 of his famous treatise on *The Spirit of Laws*, had set the example of a scientific treatment of social and moral phenomena. The problem which he had set before himself was, to determine, from a study of history, what it was that determined the character of laws and gave them their power. The variety of them, he says, admits of explanation by reference to causes, which work according to unvarying laws; and the result of his inquiries would be to reveal the characteristics and effects of every form of government, and to point out the path which legislators and peoples must follow to secure any ends which they may have in view. He pointed out that laws are relative to the character, position, climate, and size of the country, to the quality of the soil, to the mode of life of the inhabitants, to the degree of liberty allowed by the constitution, to the religion of the people, to their temper, their commerce, their manners and customs. Laws moreover are related to one another, and vary with their origin and purpose. Their character will depend, too, upon the circumstances under which they were framed. The sum total of these relations constitutes *the spirit of laws*. The government of every country should be adapted to the character and situation of the people. Each form of government has a distinct "nature" of its own. Each has also its peculiar "principle," that is, it can only exist and operate when there is an appropriate national temper, and an appropriate code of manners. Each form of government, moreover, has necessarily its own peculiar code of laws. For example, the essence of monarchy is that it is the rule of one, governing, not absolutely, but by fixed laws, and

subject to the control of subordinate orders of nobility, priests, and magistrates. Whatever strikes at the foundations of privilege, whatever weakens the independence of the orders, whatever tends to destroy love for the sovereign, or the feeling that obedience to him is honourable, prepares the way for the destruction of monarchy, and the erection either of a despotism or a democracy in its place. The mode in which the character of laws is affected by the peculiarities of governments, and the varying characteristics of peoples, institutions, and manners, is traced in detail. It is important to notice that religion is treated as only one among social phenomena. Montesquieu's idea of democracy was taken from the ideals of Greece, in which individual interests were lost in patriotic devotion. His ideas of despotism were derived from the governments of the East. His condemnation of this form of government, and his eulogium on the public spirit, which is the life of a democracy, would both tend to foster the growth of a democratic spirit in France, and to aggravate the discontent with the despotic character and tendencies of the French monarchy. His scientific treatment of religion, however veiled by politic ambiguities, would also shake public trust in the teaching of Catholicism. His panegyric on the British constitution, as combining a prompt and efficient executive with the most ample guarantees for the liberty of the subject, was itself a condemnation of the French system. There are chapters in the book, too, which are a virtual condemnation of the French system of taxation, of the criminal law, of the commercial policy, and of the intolerance of the church. A spirit of humanity and

wide and generous sympathy characterizes Montesquieu, as it does the other writers of the time.

We know that D'Alembert was a student of Montesquieu. As stated above, the positive and scientific method is common to Montesquieu and the Encyclopædists. But the writers whom we are now to consider held views on the subject of religion far different from those of the writers whom we have hitherto dealt with. Diderot's attitude towards Christianity was, at first, negative and critical. Having convinced himself that the Scriptures and the creeds of the church would not stand the test of common sense and logic, he fell back upon natural religion and deism. Finally, he took up the position that human knowledge and beliefs are, and must be relative to human faculties, and to the condition and environment of men, and that, therefore, we have not the data for such absolute knowledge of God and his relation to the world and to man, as the church professes to give. He was convinced that all that it is possible for man to do is to advance human knowledge, and to turn it to account for the benefit of the race. In the minds of Diderot, and those who thought like him, the Catholic church and the political system in France were associated with all the evil and the suffering which men were now taught to regard as removable. The Encyclopædists prepared the way for revolution by setting forth what were actually the nature and effects of the social and political system then established in the country. They did not so much attack religion directly as undermine it by the substitution of a new spirit, and by the development of new ideas, aims, and interests.

As champions of scientific inquiry, they were necessarily advocates of toleration. On this head they were, of course, in direct opposition to the church. Their sympathy with man, as man, necessarily made them the enemies of the system of social caste upon which French society rested. Their humanity, their attempts to diffuse knowledge and turn it to good account, deserve all praise. Most of the ideas for which they fought and suffered, have now become a recognized part of educated opinion. This must not detract from our admiration of men who upheld them when the profession of them was not only unpopular but dangerous. Their fault was that they took too sanguine a view of what it was possible to accomplish in the way of immediate reform. They allowed too little for the formative influences of history and circumstances. They were too apt to forget, in their condemnation of church and state, the extent to which the characters and actions of individuals are moulded and determined by the institutions of which they are the instruments and the agents. The impartiality of after criticism is not to be looked for in the heat of conflict. The spirit which animated these men was a generous one. Their industry was unwearied. Their defects were the result of their position; and they will be remembered in history as the leaders in the great conflict against unreason.

Amongst all the writers of the age, Turgot stands pre-eminent for sagacity and insight. He was imbued with the commercial principles of the Economists to which he tried to give practical effect, first as *Intendant* of a province, and after as finance minister of France. He was on friendly terms with the Encyclopædists, and

contributed articles to their great work. But on material points he was at variance with men like Diderot and D'Alembert. He agreed with them as to the importance of education. He hated, as they did, the intolerance of the church. But he was not blind to the moral and social benefits which the world has received from the Christian religion. To original genius and profound and comprehensive learning he added the experience of a practised administrator. His studies had taught him to moderate his hopes. He could not trust to principles of abstract reason as a basis of social reconstruction. The prevalent scepticism of the day seemed to him purely destructive. Though, under the circumstances, he could understand the impatient hardihood of men of letters, he was yet able to see difficulties and dangers which were hidden from them.

Two books of the century still remain to be noticed, Helvetius' treatise *On Mind*, published in 1758, and Holbach's *System of Nature*, published in 1770. According to Helvetius, man differs from the animals only in respect of the advantages which he has derived from the peculiarities of his outward form. Man's whole stock of ideas is referable to sensibility and memory, qualities which he shares with the animals. As sensation is the origin of all knowledge and opinions, rules of conduct must be relative to physical enjoyment. Man, in virtue of his physical susceptibility to pleasure and pain, has, necessarily, interests of his own. Self-interest leads him to social life, and in society justice grows up, that is, that consideration and regard for the general interest without which social life is impossible. Justice, then, is, in the last resort, self-interest; and every other so-

called virtue is, finally, the observance of a rule which conduces to the pleasure of the individual. All our feelings have grown out of, and all our actions are regulated by that desire of pleasure which is natural and necessary to beings endowed, as men are, with a physical susceptibility to pleasure and pain.

“I shall consider men as being entirely without knowledge of laws and arts, and as being nearly in the condition in which they must have been in the beginning of the world. I see them scattered in the woods like other voracious animals. I see that these first men, too feeble before the invention of arms to resist ferocious beasts, were taught by danger, necessity, or fear, that it was to the interest of each one of them to unite into a society, and to form a league against the animals, their common foes. I see next that these men, having united in this way, and having soon become hostile to one another through the desire of all to possess the same things, must have armed themselves with a view to rob one another:—that, at first, the strongest seized the property of his more intelligent neighbour who invented weapons and set ambuscades to recover his property:—that, consequently, force and skill were the first titles to property:—that the earth belonged first to the strongest, and then to the cleverest:—that, in the beginning, these were the titles by which everything was held:—but that, at last, the general misery taught men that their living together would no longer be of any advantage to them, and that societies could not exist unless, in addition to their original agreements, they covenanted that each man should renounce for himself the right to use his strength and skill, and that the community, as a whole, should



guarantee the safety of the life and property of every member, and should undertake to attack whoever violated these engagements. It was in this way that from all the interests of individuals there arose a common interest, so that actions could be called just, permissible, and unjust, according as they were useful, indifferent, or harmful to societies. Once arrived at this truth, I easily discover the origin of human virtues. I see that, without sensibility to physical pain and pleasure, men, being without desires and passions, and being equally indifferent to everything, would never have known a selfish interest. If they had had no interests of their own, they would never have formed societies nor made covenants with one another. There would thus have been no general interest, and consequently no justice or injustice. Personal interest, therefore, and physical sensibility have been the source of all morality."\*

Such views, false as they are, would harmonize with the tendency of the age to seek for an explanation of everything in sensible experience. Whatever part self-interest may have originally played in the formation of the moral sentiment, it is evident that it will not explain the developed conscience. It is evident, too, that, for us, the most important features of human nature are not those in which it resembles, but those in which it differs from the merely animal nature. Still, the reduction of morality to self-interest was a natural and a plausible, and to some extent, a useful doctrine at a time when men, after ages of oppression, were awaking to the consciousness that the universe is

\* Helvetius, *De l'Esprit*, Discours iii. ch. iv.

made for man, and not to be the pleasure-ground of the rich and powerful. At such a time it might well seem that the laws of morals, like the laws of states, were nothing but unjust contrivances for keeping the many in subjection to the few. It is but an instance of the way in which injustice develops and gives influence and importance to one-sided and revolutionary speculation.

Holbach reminds his readers irresistibly of Lucretius, the Epicurean philosopher poet of Rome. In both men there is the same earnestness of conviction, and the same passionate assurance that a true conception of science is the key to the emancipation of the race. It is this combination of scientific with human interests which attracts us in both of them. The attack of Lucretius is delivered against religion, that of Holbach against both religion and governments. Revolutions, he says, are provoked by the misery into which nations have been plunged by the ignorance and indifference of their rulers. Improvement can only be hoped for from enlightenment, that is, emancipation from the superstitions of religion. Men must abandon the attempt to penetrate to the undiscoverable Cause of things. They must be content to study nature, and to turn science to practical account. His system is purely materialistic. Nature is matter in motion. Matter is eternal, and motion is an essential property of it. Human knowledge is necessarily limited to the impressions which are made by matter upon the senses. All things in the universe, man included, are made what they are by the action of unvarying causes, from which there is no escape. Everything that is, is necessary. The hypo-

thesis of an immaterial soul, animating and influencing our material bodies, is a mere fiction invented to account for phenomena which men could not understand or explain. Man is but a part of nature, and, like the rest of nature, imperfectly understood. Free-will, of course, is a fiction. Punishment is natural, because it is the expression of feelings which are necessarily aroused by certain actions on the part of others; it is justifiable, because it acts as a preventive of anti-social conduct. There is no life after death. The object of morals and legislation should be to give to man's energies a proper direction, and to make him as happy in this world as he might be made under decent social arrangements. As knowledge is limited to sensible experience, a proof of the existence of God is, of course, impossible. The theological view of man in his relation to God is utterly repugnant to him. Man is not by nature bad, or in need of divine grace for his salvation. The evils of life and the sufferings of men are simply the result of tyranny and ignorance, and are remediable by human means.

That a nation should be trained on such literature as this was terrible to Burke. The eighteenth century was pre-eminently the age of criticism, and Burke hated criticism in the sphere of politics and ethics. He held that, instead of prying into the origin of society and government, we should thank God for the existence of them, and do all in our power to guard them. Whatever it is essential that man should know for the performance of his duty is known already. Criticism is a dangerous thing to such a creature of habit as man is. The wonder is how men were ever

brought to live together at all; and it is the height of folly to do or say anything which tends to dissolve the bonds by which they are held together. Man does not live by reason alone, but by sentiment, and by prejudice. The wise course is to strengthen and consecrate every feeling and every habit which tends to make men virtuous either in their public or private relations. Selfishness will never keep society together, and, with the disappearance of social life, man would sink to the level of a mere animal. Above all, without religion, there can be neither private nor public virtue. The severity of Burke's criticism is the greater because he thought that he saw in France the elements of a British constitution, which he regarded as the most perfect machine that has ever been invented for securing the well-being of a nation. He was blind to its defects. He did not see, or would not acknowledge, that a new spirit was infusing itself into all the peoples of Europe. He was led by his nature to give to whatever he found existing "the consecration and the poet's dream." In the mysterious fabric of the state, every part, in his eyes, is necessary to the security of the whole. Every institution is consecrated by its adaptation to the wants and feelings of the citizens, and must be preserved by their pious care and affection. As national wants and feelings change, political changes are sometimes, no doubt, necessary; but anything like a breach in the continuity of the state must be avoided. It is not only that revolutions, like floods and earthquakes, destroy the accumulated fruits of human labour, but the pride of long descent engenders and keeps alive a generous spirit in a people. When changes are in harmony with pre-

existing feelings, and manners, and institutions, the habit of obedience is continued unimpaired. People fall in naturally with reforms for which their circumstances have been gradually preparing them. The wise reformer will always proceed along the line of least resistance. Instead of forcing men into new paths, he will provide for their wants by remodelling those institutions which they know and love. His sense of responsibility will keep him from playing with the happiness of a people.

The character of books is determined by the age in which they appear. The literature which Burke attacks was provoked by a system of government which could not any longer be endured. Burke thought that it was an attack upon government as such. He seemed to himself to be confronted, as Aristotle was in old days, with sophists who impaired the authority of the state, by proclaiming that it exists only by convention and not by nature. In reality Burke and his opponents both teach true and necessary lessons. If the one teaches us the sacredness of order, and the dangers of reckless change and a mere policy of adventure; the others teach us a not less necessary regard for humanity and the rights of man as man. Burke allows that necessity sometimes justifies revolutions, but he is too slow to allow that the necessity has arisen. He could not see that in the case of France, a violent change was inevitable. The government had awakened in the nation a revolutionary spirit which was fatal to its own existence, and

All the past of Time reveals \*  
A bridal dawn of thunder-peals;  
Wherever Thought hath wedded Fact.

## HISTORICAL SUMMARY.

LOUIS XVI., a well-meaning but weak monarch, ascended the throne in 1774. Turgot was almost immediately made minister of finance. The people hoped much from the administration of a man who had shown that he combined ability with integrity. Retrenchment and equal taxation were the watchwords of his policy. With full knowledge of the opposition which he would provoke, he firmly insisted that the first step to be taken was to reduce expenditure within the limits of income. He did what he could to curtail needless and corrupt expenditure, to free the peasantry from ruinous exactions, to lower the price of food by the abolition of monopolies, to remove restrictions on foreign trade, to facilitate communication in the interior of the country, and to reduce the rate of interest on state loans. He succeeded, to some extent, in reducing the deficit. He had difficulties to contend with, in the jealousy of opponents, the resistance of those who were interested in the maintenance of abuses, and the lawlessness which reigned in parts of the country owing to scarcity and high prices. The king was not strong enough to resist the influence of the court and the queen, and Turgot was dismissed in the middle of the year 1776.

Turgot was succeeded by Necker, a man inferior to

him in ability and energy, but skilled in finance, liberal, and humane. He effected certain reforms by the suppression of useless offices, and by alterations in the revenue system. But in 1778 France sided with America in her struggle with England. The expenses of the war, which lasted until near the end of 1783, again involved a large increase of the national debt. The reforms of Necker provoked the hostility of the parliament of Paris. Finding that he was not supported by the king or by the rest of the ministry, he resigned office in the summer of 1781. The management of the finances was then entrusted, first to Joly de Fleury, and afterwards to D'Ormesson, both insignificant and incapable men.

In the autumn of 1783 Calonne was appointed finance minister, chiefly through the influence of Marie Antoinette. His policy was simply to conciliate the court and the privileged classes. His reckless extravagance at length brought matters to such a pitch that it was impossible even to pay the interest on the state loans. He was driven to propose the very reforms which Turgot had in vain attempted to carry, and, with a view of obtaining a semblance of public sanction, he induced the king to summon an assembly of the notables, "a sort of popular Privy Council selected by the king at his discretion, neither recognized nor protected by law, but still a body known in the history of France."\* This assembly met at Versailles in February, 1787. Being composed of members of the privileged classes, it naturally rejected the proposed equalization of imposts, and the abolition of the pecun-

\* Mackintosh.

iary exemptions of the nobles and clergy. Calonne, accordingly, resigned.

Calonne was succeeded by Brienne, Archbishop of Toulouse, also a favourite of the queen. He induced the notables to accept some of the measures which had been proposed by Calonne, and the assembly was dismissed in May, 1787. Brienne now found himself opposed by the parliaments, who demanded the meeting of the states general, on the ground that the king had no power to levy the proposed taxes without the consent of the people. This declaration at once aroused popular enthusiasm in the country. The attempts made by Brienne to coerce the parliaments failed. The nobles and clergy preferred an appeal to the nation to unconditional submission to the king. Discontent was rife throughout the land. The need for money was urgent. The king at last yielded, and declared his intention of summoning the states general.

Brienne resigned in August, 1788, and, as a conciliatory measure, the king recalled Necker, and reappointed him minister of finance. This appointment restored public confidence. Disputes, however, immediately arose as to the constitution and procedure of the approaching states general. It soon became evident that the people would be content with nothing short of the total abolition of privileges, an impartial administration of law, and an equal system of taxation. Louis, under pressure from Necker, yielded so far as to consent that the representatives of the third estate should be equal in number to the representatives of the other two orders taken together. The important question whether all should sit and vote in one chamber, or whether they



should vote by orders, was left open. The outlook was a gloomy one. The nobles had hoped that the convocation of the states general would lead to the establishment of a constitutional monarchy, in which their position and privileges would be secure. The king had hoped that he would obtain the assistance of the people in taxing the privileged orders. The action of the people disappointed both parties.

The king opened the states general at Versailles on May 5, 1789. The representatives of the third estate at once refused to proceed to business except on condition that the three orders sat and voted together. They were supported by a minority of the nobles, and by a large number of parish priests who had been returned as representatives of the clergy. Finding their demand was not complied with, and assured of the support of the nation, they declared themselves to be the National Assembly. They invited the other orders to join them in beginning business, declaring, at the same time, that they would begin their task, whether the other orders joined them or not. Upon this act of usurpation, as it appeared to the court, and as it is described by Burke, Louis, who was by no means prepared for the transference of his own power to the assembly, or for the substitution of a democracy for a constitutional monarchy, declared his intention to hold a royal sitting, and to address the assembly himself. Finding themselves excluded from their hall of meeting, on the ground that it was necessary to prepare the room for the reception of the king, the deputies of the third estate, on June 20th, adjourned to a neighbouring tennis court, where they took an oath not to separate

until they had accomplished their work of constitutional reform. On June 23rd the royal sitting was held. The king defined the subjects which it was within the competence of the deputies to discuss. He ordered them to disperse for that day, and to reassemble on the following day in their separate chambers. He concluded by saying that, if his orders were not obeyed, "he would himself provide for the welfare of his people." When the king retired, the deputies of the third estate with several of the clergy remained in their places. To the remonstrances of the king's master of the ceremonies, Mirabeau replied that they would not yield except to force. His words were applauded in the assembly, and, when they became known, throughout the country. The deputies, before dispersing, declared their persons inviolable. The king was so alarmed at this that he personally requested those of the nobles and clergy, who had not already done so, to join the representatives of the third estate, and the three orders were combined in a single assembly on June 27th. At the same time, Louis alarmed the people by concentrating bodies of Swiss and German troops round the capital. Necker, who was opposed to this policy of intimidation, was dismissed from office on July 11th. This led to a popular outbreak in Paris, and a body of German troops charged the mob. The officers of the French troops could not trust their men. The Guards, 3,600 strong, went over to the people, who armed themselves, and on July 14th attacked and captured the Bastille.

Louis was now obliged to yield. He was received with acclamation in the capital, whither he went to announce the withdrawal of the troops and the recall

of Necker. He recognized the appointment of Lafayette as commander of the new city militia, or National Guard, and of Bailly, who had been president of the deputies when the oath was taken in the tennis court, as mayor of Paris. Foulon, an unpopular official, and his son-in-law, Berthier, were murdered by the mob. The news of the events in Paris led to outbreaks of violence throughout France. Municipal authorities supplanted the old government officials; and National Guards were established throughout the provinces. But the municipalities were too weak to maintain order, and the Guards often sympathized with the people, from whose ranks they were drawn. On August 4th, the assembly passed the celebrated decrees which abolished the old feudal orders. The Declaration of the Rights of Man followed. They then proceeded to consider the form of the new constitution. It was determined that the new legislature should consist of a single house, which was to meet every two years; and that the king should have power to veto any decree for the period of two sessions. On the 5th and 6th October occurred the outbreak, which resulted in the king being brought to Paris, and lodged in the Tuileries.\* The assembly in a few days followed the king. The legislative and judicial measures† were next passed, and, to supply the want of money, the property of the church was declared to be at the service of the state. Paper money was issued on the security of this property. A forced currency was afterwards given to it, and it suffered a progressive depreciation with every fresh issue. Monasteries and nunneries were suppressed, and their inmates

\* See note on p. 72, l. 16. † See note on p. 58, l. 5.

dismissed with a pension. The church was reorganized, and a provision allotted for the maintenance of it from the public treasury. On June 9th, 1790, was passed the decree abolishing titles and armorial bearings; and on July 14th of the same year, the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, the great federation \* was held in Paris, in honour of the new constitution.

The state of the country, meanwhile, was unsatisfactory. The nobles and the higher ranks of the clergy were exasperated by the levelling policy of the assembly. The peasantry were angry because they were not emancipated from legal debts and obligations as well as from feudal exactions. In many places they rose against the seigneurs, and destroyed their houses and title-deeds. The assembly was afraid to entrust the king with power to repress disturbances. The local municipalities were still, for the most part, unequal to the task. The National Guards were still, as before, in sympathy with the riotous peasantry. Scarcity of bread added to the prevailing discontent, which was fanned by those to whom the policy of the government appeared to be not sufficiently democratic. This general dissatisfaction gave power to the Jacobin clubs which were established in almost every town and village of the country. The ministry could not retain office in face of the many attacks that were made upon them, and Necker, finding that his popularity had gone, left the country in September, 1790. Everything was tending to establish and confirm the supremacy of the extreme democratic party.

See note on p. 213, l. 32.



## PREFACE.

It may not be unnecessary to inform the Reader, that the following Reflections had their origin in a correspondence between the Author and a very young gentleman at Paris, who did him the honour of desiring his opinion upon the important transactions, which then, and ever since, have so much occupied the attention of all men. An answer was written some time in the month of October, 1789; but it was kept back upon prudential considerations. That letter is alluded to in the beginning of the following sheets. It has been since forwarded to the person to whom it was addressed. The reasons for the delay in sending it were assigned in a short letter to the same gentleman. This produced on his part a new and pressing application for the Author's sentiments.

The Author began a second and more full discussion on the subject. This he had some thoughts of publishing early in the last spring; but the matter gaining upon him, he found that what he had undertaken not only far exceeded the measure of a letter, but that its importance required rather a more detailed consideration than at that time he had any leisure to bestow upon it. However, having thrown down his first thoughts in the form of a letter, and indeed when he sat down to write, having intended it for a private letter, he found it difficult to change the form of address, when his sentiments had grown into a greater extent, and had received another direction. A different plan, he is sensible, might be more favourable to a commodious division and distribution of his matter.

# REFLECTIONS ON THE REVOLUTION IN FRANCE.

DEAR SIR,

You are pleased to call again, and with some earnestness, for my thoughts on the late proceedings in France. I will not give you reason to imagine that I think my sentiments of such value as to wish myself to be solicited about them. They are of too little consequence to be very anxiously either communicated or withheld. It was from attention to you, and to you only, that I hesitated at the time, when you first desired to receive them. In the first letter I had the honour to write to you, and which at length I send, I wrote neither for nor from any description of men ; nor shall I in this. My errors, if any, are my own. My reputation alone is to answer for them.

You see, Sir, by the long letter I have transmitted to you, that, though I do most heartily wish that France may be animated by a spirit of rational liberty, and that I think you bound, in all honest policy, to provide a permanent body, in which that spirit may reside, and an effectual organ, by which it may act, it is my misfortune to entertain great doubts concerning several material points in your late transactions.

You imagined, when you wrote last, that I might possibly be reckoned among the approvers of certain proceedings in

France, from the solemn public seal of sanction they have received from two clubs of gentlemen in London, called the Constitutional Society, and the Revolution Society.

I certainly have the honour to belong to more clubs than one, in which the constitution of this kingdom and the principles of the glorious Revolution, are held in high reverence; and I reckon myself among the most forward in my zeal for maintaining that constitution and those principles in their utmost purity and vigour. It is because I do so, that I think  
 10 it necessary for me, that there should be no mistake. Those who cultivate the memory of our revolution, and those who are attached to the constitution of this kingdom, will take good care how they are involved with persons who, under the pretext of zeal towards the Revolution and Constitution, too frequently wander from their true principles; and are ready on every occasion to depart from the firm but cautious and deliberate spirit which produced the one, and which presides in the other. Before I proceed to answer the more material particulars in your letter, I shall beg leave to give you such  
 20 information as I have been able to obtain of the two clubs which have thought proper, as bodies, to interfere in the concerns of France; first assuring you, that I am not, and that  
 • I have never been, a member of either of those societies.

The first, calling itself the Constitutional Society, or Society for Constitutional Information, or by some such title, is, I believe, of seven or eight years standing. The institution of this society appears to be of a charitable, and so far of a laudable, nature: it was intended for the circulation, at the expense of the members, of many books, which few others  
 30 would be at the expense of buying; and which might lie on the hands of the booksellers, to the great loss of an useful body of men. Whether the books so charitably circulated, were ever as charitably read, is more than I know. Possibly several of them have been exported to France; and, like goods not in request here, may with you have found a market. I have heard much talk of the lights to be drawn from books



that are sent from hence. What improvements they have had in their passage (as it is said some liquors are meliorated by crossing the sea) I cannot tell : but I never heard a man of common judgment, or the least degree of information, speak a word in praise of the greater part of the publications circulated by that society ; nor have their proceedings been accounted, except by some of themselves, as of any serious consequence.

Your National Assembly seems to entertain much the same opinion that I do of this poor charitable club. As a nation, 10 you reserved the whole stock of your eloquent acknowledgments for the Revolution Society ; when their fellows in the Constitutional were, in equity, entitled to some share. Since you have selected the Revolution Society as the great object of your national thanks and praises, you will think me excusable in making its late conduct the subject of my observations. The National Assembly of France has given importance to these gentlemen by adopting them ; and they return the favour, by acting as a committee in England for extending the principles of the National Assembly. Hence- 20 forward we must consider them as a kind of privileged persons ; as no inconsiderable members in the diplomatic body. This is one among the revolutions which have given splendour to obscurity, and distinction to undiscerned merit. Until very lately I do not recollect to have heard of this club. I am quite sure that it never occupied a moment of my thoughts ; nor, I believe, those of any person out of their own set. I find, upon inquiry, that on the anniversary of the Revolution in 1688, a club of dissenters, but of what denomination I know not, have long had the custom of hearing a 30 sermon in one of their churches ; and that afterwards they spent the day cheerfully, as other clubs do, at the tavern. But I never heard that any public measure, or political system, much less that the merits of the constitution of any foreign nation, had been the subject of a formal proceeding at their festivals ; until, to my inexpressible surprise, I found

them in a sort of public capacity, by a congratulatory address, giving an authoritative sanction to the proceedings of the National Assembly in France.

In the ancient principles and conduct of the club, so far at least as they were declared, I see nothing to which I could take exception. I think it very probable, that for some purpose, new members may have entered among them; and that some truly christian politicians, who love to dispense benefits, but are careful to conceal the hand which distributes the  
 10 dole, may have made them the instruments of their pious designs. Whatever I may have reason to suspect concerning private management, I shall speak of nothing as of a certainty, but what is public.

For one, I should be sorry to be thought, directly or indirectly, concerned in their proceedings. I certainly take my full share, along with the rest of the world, in my individual and private capacity, in speculating on what has been done, or is doing, on the public stage; in any place ancient or modern; in the republic of Rome, or the republic of  
 20 Paris; but having no general apostolical mission, being a citizen of a particular state, and being bound up, in a considerable degree, by its public will, I should think it, at least improper and irregular, for me to open a formal public correspondence with the actual government of a foreign nation, without the express authority of the government under which I live.

I should be still more unwilling to enter into that correspondence, under anything like an equivocal description, which to many, unacquainted with our usages, might make  
 30 the address, in which I joined, appear as the act of persons in some sort of corporate capacity, acknowledged by the laws of this kingdom, and authorized to speak the sense of some part of it. On account of the ambiguity and uncertainty of unauthorized general descriptions, and of the deceit which may be practised under them, and not from mere formality, the house of Commons would reject the most

sneaking petition for the most trifling object, under that mode of signature to which you have thrown open the folding-doors of your presence chamber, and have ushered into your National Assembly, with as much ceremony and parade, and with as great a bustle of applause, as if you had been visited by the whole representative majesty of the whole English nation. If what this society has thought proper to send forth had been a piece of argument, it would have signified little whose argument it was. It would be neither the more nor the less convincing on account of the party it 10 came from. But this is only a vote and resolution. It stands solely on authority; and in this case it is the mere authority of individuals, few of whom appear. Their signatures ought, in my opinion, to have been annexed to their instrument. The world would then have the means of knowing how many they are; who they are; and of what value their opinions may be, from their personal abilities, from their knowledge, their experience, or their lead and authority in this state. To me, who am but a plain man, the proceeding looks a little too refined, and too ingenious; it 20 has too much the air of a political stratagem, adopted for the sake of giving, under an high-sounding name, an importance to the public declarations of this club, which, when the matter came to be closely inspected, they did not altogether so well deserve. It is a policy that has very much the complexion of a fraud.

I flatter myself that I love a manly, moral, regulated liberty as well as any gentleman of that society. be he who he will; and perhaps I have given as good proofs of my attachment to that cause, in the whole course of my public conduct. I 30 think I envy liberty as little as they do, to any other nation. But I cannot stand forward, and give praise or blame to any thing which relates to human actions, and human concerns, on a simple view of the object as it stands stripped of every relation, in all the nakedness and solitude of metaphysical abstraction. Circumstances (which with some gentlemen

pass for nothing) give in reality to every political principle its distinguishing colour, and discriminating effect. The circumstances are what render every civil and political scheme beneficial or noxious to mankind. Abstractedly speaking, government, as well as liberty, is good ; yet could I, in common sense, ten years ago, have felicitated France on her enjoyment of a government (for she then had a government) without enquiry what the nature of that government was, or how it was administered ? Can I now congratulate  
 10 the same nation upon its freedom ? Is it because liberty in the abstract may be classed amongst the blessings of mankind, that I am seriously to felicitate a madman, who has escaped from the protecting restraint and wholesome darkness of his cell, on his restoration to the enjoyment of light and liberty ? Am I to congratulate an highway man and murderer, who has broke prison, upon the recovery of his natural rights ? This would be to act over again the scene of the criminals condemned to the gallies, and their heroic deliverer, the metaphysic Knight of the Sorrowful Countenance.  
 20

When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work ; and this, for a while, is all I can possibly know of it. The wild *gas*, the fixed air, is plainly broke loose : but we ought to suspend our judgment until the first effervescence is a little subsided, till the liquor is cleared, and until we see something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy surface. I must be tolerably sure, before I venture publicly to congratulate men upon a blessing, that they have really received one. Flattery corrupts both the  
 30 receiver and the giver ; and adulation is not of more service to the people than to kings. I should therefore suspend my congratulations on the new liberty of France, until I was informed how it had been combined with government ; with public force ; with the discipline and obedience of armies ; with the collection of an effective and well-distributed revenue ; with morality and religion ; with the solidity of

property ; with peace and order ; with civil and social manners. All these (in their way) are good things too ; and, without them, liberty is not a benefit whilst it lasts, and is not likely to continue long. The effect of liberty to individuals is, that they may do what they please : we ought to see what it will please them to do, before we risk congratulations, which may be soon turned into complaints. Prudence would dictate this in the case of separate insulated private men ; but liberty, when men act in bodies, is *power*. Considerate people, before they declare themselves, will observe the use 10 which is made of *power* ; and particularly of so trying a thing as *new power* in *new persons*, of whose principles, tempers, and dispositions, they have little or no experience, and in situations where those who appear the most stirring in the scene may possibly not be the real movers.

All these considerations however were below the transcendental dignity of the Revolution Society. Whilst I continued in the country, from whence I had the honour of writing to you, I had but an imperfect idea of their transactions. On my coming to town, I sent for an account of their proceedings, which had been published by their authority, containing a sermon of Dr. Price, with the Duke de Rochefoucault's and the Archbishop of Aix's letter, and several other documents annexed. The whole of that publication, with the manifest design of connecting the affairs of France with those of England, by drawing us into an imitation of the conduct of the National Assembly, gave me a considerable degree of uneasiness. The effect of that conduct upon the power, credit, prosperity, and tranquillity of France, became every day more evident. The form of constitution to be settled, 30 for its future polity, became more clear. We are now in a condition to discern, with tolerable exactness, the true nature of the object held up to our imitation. If the prudence of reserve and decorum dictates silence in some circumstances, in others prudence of an higher order may justify us in speaking our thoughts. The beginnings of

confusion with us in England are at present feeble enough ; but with you, we have seen an infancy still more feeble, growing by moments into a strength to heap mountains upon mountains, and to wage war with Heaven itself. Whenever our neighbour's house is on fire, it cannot be amiss for the engines to play a little on our own. Better to be despised for too anxious apprehensions, than ruined by too confident a security.

Solicitous chiefly for the peace of my own country, but by  
10 no means unconcerned for your's, I wish to communicate more largely, what was at first intended only for your private satisfaction. I shall still keep your affairs in my eye, and continue to address myself to you. Indulging myself in the freedom of epistolary intercourse, I beg leave to throw out my thoughts, and express my feelings, just as they arise in my mind, with very little attention to formal method. I set out with the proceedings of the Revolution Society ; but I shall not confine myself to them. Is it possible I should ? It looks to me as if I were in a great crisis, not of the affairs  
20 of France alone, but of all Europe, perhaps of more than Europe. All circumstances taken together, the French revolution is the most astonishing that has hitherto happened in the world. The most wonderful things are brought about in many instances by means the most absurd and ridiculous ; in the most ridiculous modes ; and apparently, by the most contemptible instruments. Every thing seems out of nature in this strange chaos of levity and ferocity, and of all sorts of crimes jumbled together with all sorts of follies. In viewing this monstrous tragi-comic scene, the most opposite passions  
30 necessarily succeed, and sometimes mix with each other in the mind : alternate laughter and tears ; alternate scorn and horror.

It cannot however be denied, that to some this strange scene appeared in quite another point of view. Into them it inspired no other sentiments than those of exultation and rapture. They saw nothing in what has been done in France,

but a firm and temperate exertion of freedom ; so consistent, on the whole, with morals and with piety, as to make it deserving not only of the secular applause of dashing Machiavelian politicians, but to render it a fit theme for all the devout effusions of sacred eloquence.

On the forenoon of the 4th of November last, Doctor Richard Price, a non-conforming minister of eminence, preached at the dissenting meeting-house of the Old Jewry, to his club or society, a very extraordinary miscellaneous sermon, in which there are some good moral and religious 10 sentiments, and not ill expressed, mixed up in a sort of porridge of various political opinions and reflections : but the revolution in France is the grand ingredient in the cauldron. I consider the address transmitted by the Revolution Society to the National Assembly, through Earl Stanhope, as originating in the principles of the sermon, and as a corollary from them. It was moved by the preacher of that discourse. It was passed by those who came reeking from the effect of the sermon, without any censure or qualification, expressed or implied. If, however, any of the gentlemen concerned shall 20 wish to separate the sermon from the resolution, they know how to acknowledge the one, and to disavow the other. They may do it : I cannot.

For my part, I looked on that sermon as the public declaration of a man much connected with literary caballers, and intriguing philosophers ; with political theologians, and theological politicians, both at home and abroad. I know they set him up as a sort of oracle ; because, with the best intentions in the world, he naturally *philippizes*, and chants his prophetic song in exact unison with their designs. 30

That sermon is in a strain which I believe has not been heard in this kingdom, in any of the pulpits which are tolerated or encouraged in it, since the year 1648, when a predecessor of Dr. Price, the Reverend Hugh Peters, made the vault of the king's own chapel at St. James's ring with the honour and privilege of the Saints, who, with the 'high

praises of God in their mouths, and a *two-edged sword* in their hands, were to execute judgment on the heathen, and punishments upon the *people*; to bind their *kings* with chains, and their *nobles* with fetters of iron.\* Few harangues from the pulpit, except in the days of your league in France, or in the days of our solemn league and covenant in England, have ever breathed less of the spirit of moderation than this lecture in the Old Jewry. Supposing, however, that something like moderation were visible in this political sermon ;

10 yet politics and the pulpit are terms that have little agreement. No sound ought to be heard in the church but the healing voice of Christian charity. The cause of civil liberty and civil government gains as little as that of religion by this confusion of duties. Those who quit their proper character, to assume what does not belong to them, are, for the greater part, ignorant both of the character they leave, and of the character they assume. Wholly unacquainted with the world in which they are so fond of meddling, and inexperienced in

20 dence, they have nothing of politics but the passions they excite. Surely the church is a place where one day's truce ought to be allowed to the dissensions and animosities of mankind.

This pulpit style, revived after so long a discontinuance, had to me the air of novelty, and of a novelty not wholly without danger. I do not charge this danger equally to every part of the discourse. The hint given to a noble and reverend lay-divine, who is supposed high in office in one of our universities,† and to other lay-divines 'of *rank* and literature,'

30 may be proper and seasonable, though somewhat new. If the noble *Seekers* should find nothing to satisfy their pious fancies in the old staple of the national church, or in all the rich variety to be found in the well-assorted warehouses of

\* Psalm cxlix.

† Discourse on the Love of our Country, Nov. 4, 1789, by Dr. Richard Price, 3d edition, pp. 17 and 18.



the dissenting congregations, Dr. Price advises them to improve upon non-conformity ; and to set up, each of them, a separate meeting-house upon his own particular principles.\* It is somewhat remarkable that this reverend divine should be so earnest for setting up new churches, and so perfectly indifferent concerning the doctrine which may be taught in them. His zeal is of a curious character. It is not for the propagation of his own opinions, but of any opinions. It is not for the diffusion of truth, but for the spreading of contradiction. Let the noble teachers but dissent, it is no matter 10 from whom or from what. This great point once secured, it is taken for granted their religion will be rational and manly. I doubt whether religion would reap all the benefits which the calculating divine computes from this 'great company of great preachers.' It would certainly be a valuable addition of nondescripts to the ample collection of known classes, genera and species, which at present beautify the *hortus siccus* of dissent. A sermon from a noble duke, or a noble marquis, or a noble earl, or baron bold, would certainly increase and diversify the amusements of this town, which begins to grow 20 satiated with the uniform round of its vapid dissipations. I should only stipulate that these new *Mess-Johns* in robes and coronets should keep some sort of bounds in the democratic and levelling principles which are expected from their titled pulpits. The new evangelists will, I dare say, disappoint the hopes that are conceived of them. They will not become, literally as well as figuratively, polemic divines, nor be disposed so to drill their congregations that they may, as in former blessed times, preach their doctrines to regiments of dragoons, and corps of infantry and artillery. Such arrange- 30 ments, however favourable to the cause of compulsory free-

\* 'Those who dislike that mode of worship which is prescribed by public authority ought, if they can find *no* worship out of the church which they approve, to set up a separate worship for themselves ; and by doing this, and giving an example of a rational and manly worship, men of *rank* from their rank and literature may do the greatest service to society and the world.' P. 18, Dr. Price's Sermon.

dom, civil and religious, may not be equally conducive to the national tranquillity. These few restrictions I hope are no great stretches of intolerance, no very violent exertions of despotism.

BUT I may say of our preacher, '*utinam nugis tota illa dedisset tempora sevitiæ*'—

[*Oh! that such scenes, disgraceful at the most,  
Had all those years of tyranny engrossed.*]

All things in this his fulminating bull are not of so innoxious  
10 a tendency. His doctrines affect our constitution in its vital parts. He tells the Revolution Society, in this political sermon, that his majesty 'is almost the *only* lawful king in the world, because the *only* one who owes his crown to the choice of his people.' As to the kings of the world, all of whom (except one) this archpontiff of the *rights of men*, with all the plenitude, and with more than the boldness of the papal deposing power in its meridian fervour of the twelfth century, puts into one sweeping clause of ban and anathema, and proclaims usurpers by circles of longitude and latitude, over  
20 the whole globe, it behoves them to consider how they admit into their territories these apostolic missionaries, who are to tell their subjects they are not lawful kings. That is, their concern. It is ours, as a domestic interest of some moment, seriously to consider the solidity of the *only* principle upon which these gentlemen acknowledge a king of Great Britain to be entitled to their allegiance.

This doctrine, as applied to the prince now on the British throne, either is nonsense, and therefore neither true nor false, or it affirms a most unfounded, dangerous, illegal, and  
30 unconstitutional position: According to this spiritual doctor of politics, if his majesty does not owe his crown to the choice of his people, he is no lawful king. Now nothing can be more untrue than that the crown of this kingdom is so held by his majesty. Therefore, if you follow their rule, the king of Great Britain, who most certainly does not owe

his high office to any form of popular election, is in no respect better than the rest of the gang of usurpers, who reign, or rather rob, all over the face of this our miserable world, without any sort of right or title to the allegiance of their people. The policy of this general doctrine, so qualified, is evident enough. The propagators of this political gospel are in hopes their abstract principle (their principle that a popular choice is necessary to the legal existence of the sovereign magistracy) would be overlooked whilst the king of Great Britain was not affected by it. In 10 the mean time the ears of their congregations would be gradually habituated to it, as if it were a first principle admitted without dispute. For the present it would only operate as a theory, pickled in the preserving juices of pulpit eloquence, and laid by for future use. *Condo et compono quæ mox depromere possim*—

*[I search and search, and when I find, I lay*

*The wisdom up against a rainy day.]*

By this policy, whilst our government is soothed with a reservation in its favour, to which it has no claim, the 20 security, which it has in common with all governments, so far as opinion is security, is taken away.

Thus these politicians proceed, whilst little notice is taken of their doctrines: but when they come to be examined upon the plain meaning of their words and the direct tendency of their doctrines, then equivocations and slippery constructions come into play. When they say the king owes his crown to the choice of his people, and is therefore the only lawful sovereign in the world, they will perhaps tell us they mean to say no more than that some of the king's 30 predecessors have been called to the throne by some sort of choice; and therefore he owes his crown to the choice of his people. Thus, by a miserable subterfuge, they hope to render their proposition safe, by rendering it nugatory. They are welcome to the asylum they seek for their offence, since they take refuge in their folly. For, if you admit this

interpretation, how does their idea of election differ from our idea of inheritance? And how does the settlement of the crown in the Brunswick line derived from James the first come to legalize our monarchy, rather than that of any of the neighbouring countries? At some time or other, to be sure, all the beginners of dynasties were chosen by those who called them to govern. There is ground enough for the opinion that all the kingdoms of Europe were, at a remote period, elective, with more or fewer limitations in the  
 10 objects of choice; but whatever kings might have been here or elsewhere, a thousand years ago, or in whatever manner the ruling dynasties of England or France may have begun, the King of Great Britain is at this day king by a fixed rule of succession, according to the laws of his country; and whilst the legal conditions of the compact of sovereignty are performed by him (as they are performed) he holds his crown in contempt of the choice of the Revolution Society, who have not a single vote for a king amongst them, either individually or collectively; though I make no doubt they  
 20 would soon erect themselves into an electoral college, if things were ripe to give effect to their claim. His majesty's heirs and successors, each in his time and order, will come to the crown with the same contempt of their choice with which his majesty has succeeded to that he wears.

Whatever may be the success of evasion in explaining away the gross error of *fact*, which supposes that his majesty (though he holds it in concurrence with the wishes) owes his crown to the choice of his people, yet nothing can evade their full explicit declaration, concerning the principle of a  
 30 right in the people to choose, which right is directly maintained, and tenaciously adhered to. All the oblique insinuations concerning election bottom in this proposition, and are referable to it. Lest the foundation of the king's exclusive legal title should pass for a mere rant of adulatory freedom, the political Divine proceeds dogmatically to assert,\* that by

\* P. 34, Discourse on the Love of our Country, by Dr. Price.

the principles of the Revolution the people of England have acquired three fundamental rights, all which, with him, compose one system, and lie together in one short sentence; namely, that we have acquired a right

1. 'To choose our own governors.'
2. 'To cashier them for misconduct.'
3. 'To frame a government for ourselves.'

This new, and hitherto unheard-of bill of rights, though made in the name of the whole people, belongs to those gentlemen and their faction only. The body of the people 10 of England have no share in it. They utterly disclaim it. They will resist the practical assertion of it with their lives and fortunes. They are bound to do so by the laws of their country, made at the time of that very Revolution, which is appealed to in favour of the fictitious rights claimed by the society which abuses its name.

THESE gentlemen of the Old Jewry, in all their reasonings on the Revolution of 1688, have a revolution which happened in England about forty years before, and the late French revolution, so much before their eyes, and in their 20 hearts, that they are constantly confounding all the three together. It is necessary that we should separate what they confound. We must recall their erring fancies to the *acts* of the Revolution which we revere, for the discovery of its true *principles*. If the *principles* of the Revolution of 1688 are any where to be found, it is in the statute called the *Declaration of Right*. In that most wise, sober, and considerate declaration, drawn up by great lawyers and great statesmen, and not by warm and inexperienced enthusiasts, not one word is said, nor one suggestion made, of a general right 30 'to choose our own governors; to cashier them for misconduct; and to form a government for ourselves.'

This Declaration of Right (the act of the 1st of William and Mary, sess. 2. ch. 2) is the corner-stone of our constitution, as reinforced, explained, improved, and in its funda-

mental principles for ever settled. It is called 'An act for declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for settling the succession of the crown. You will observe, that these rights and this succession are declared in one body, and bound indissolubly together.

A few years after this period, a second opportunity offered for asserting a right of election to the crown. On the prospect of a total failure of issue from King William, and from the Princess, afterwards Queen Anne, the consideration  
 10 of the settlement of the crown, and of a further security for the liberties of the people, again came before the legislature. Did they this second time make any provision for legalizing the crown on the spurious Revolution principles of the Old Jewry? No. They followed the principles which prevailed in the Declaration of Right; indicating with more precision the persons who were to inherit in the Protestant line. This act also incorporated, by the same policy, our liberties, and an hereditary succession in the same act. Instead of a right to choose our own governors, they  
 20 declared that the *succession* in that line (the protestant line drawn from James the First) was absolutely necessary 'for the peace, quiet, and security of the realm,' and that it was equally urgent on them 'to maintain a *certainly in the succession* thereof, to which the subjects may safely have recourse for their protection.' Both these acts, in which are heard the unerring, unambiguous oracles of Revolution policy, instead of countenancing the delusive, gipsy predictions of a 'right to choose our governors,' prove to a demonstration how totally adverse the wisdom of the  
 30 nation was from turning a case of necessity into a rule of law.

Unquestionably there was at the Revolution, in the person of King William, a small and a temporary deviation from the strict order of regular hereditary succession; but it is against all genuine principles of jurisprudence to draw a principle from a law made in a special case, and regarding

an individual person. *Privilegium non transit in exemplum.* [A privilege does not make a precedent.] If ever there was a time favourable for establishing the principle, that a king of popular choice was the only legal king, without all doubt it was at the Revolution. Its not being done at that time is a proof that the nation was of opinion it ought not to be done at any time. There is no person so completely ignorant of our history, as not to know, that the majority in Parliament of both parties were so little disposed to any thing resembling that principle, that at first they were determined to place the vacant crown, not on the head of the prince of Orange, but on that of his wife Mary, daughter of King James, the eldest born of the issue of that king, which they acknowledged as undoubtedly his. It would be to repeat a very trite story, to recall to your memory all those circumstances which demonstrated that their accepting King William was not properly a choice; but, to all those who did not wish, in effect to recall King James, or to deluge their country in blood, and again to bring their religion, laws, and liberties into the peril they had just escaped, it was an act of necessity, in the strictest moral sense in which necessity can be taken.

In the very act, in which for a time, and in a single case, parliament departed from the strict order of inheritance, in favour of a prince, who, though not next, was however very near in the line of succession, it is curious to observe how Lord Somers, who drew the bill called the Declaration of Right, has comported himself on that delicate occasion. It is curious to observe with what address this temporary solution of continuity is kept from the eye; whilst all that could be found in this act of necessity to countenance the idea of an hereditary succession is brought forward, and fostered, and made the most of, by this great man, and by the legislature who followed him. Quitting the dry, imperative style of an act of parliament, he makes the lords and commons fall to a pious, legislative ejaculation, and

declare, that they consider it 'as a marvellous providence, and merciful goodness of God to this nation, to preserve their said majesties' royal persons most happily to reign over us *on the throne of their ancestors*, for which, from the bottom of their hearts, they return their humblest thanks and praises.'—The legislature plainly had in view the Act of Recognition of the first of Queen Elizabeth, Chap. 3d, and of that of James the First, Chap. 1st, both acts strongly declaratory of the inheritable nature of the crown; and in many  
10 parts they follow, with a nearly literal precision, the words and even the form of thanksgiving, which is found in these old declaratory statutes.

The two houses, in the act of king William, did not thank God that they had found a fair opportunity to assert a right to choose their own governors, much less to make an election the *only lawful* title to the crown. Their having been in a condition to avoid the very appearance of it, as much as possible, was by them considered as a providential escape. They threw a politic, well-wrought veil over every  
20 circumstance tending to weaken the rights, which in the meliorated order of succession they meant to perpetuate: or which might furnish a precedent for any future departure from what they had then settled for ever. Accordingly, that they might not relax the nerves of their monarchy, and that they might preserve a close conformity to the practice of their ancestors, as it appeared in the declaratory statutes of Queen Mary\* and Queen Elizabeth, in the next clause they vest, by recognition, in their majesties, all the legal prerogatives of the crown, declaring, 'that in them they are most  
30 fully, rightfully, and entirely invested, incorporated, united, and annexed.' In the clause which follows, for preventing questions, by reason of any pretended titles to the crown, they declare (observing also in this the traditionary language, along with the traditionary policy of the nation, and repeating as from a rubric the language of the preceding acts of

\* 1st Mary, Sess. 3. ch. 1.



Elizabeth and James) that on the preserving 'a *certainly* in the succession thereof, the unity, peace, and tranquillity of this nation doth, under God, wholly depend.'

They knew that a doubtful title of succession would but too much resemble an election; and that an election would be utterly destructive of the 'unity, peace, and tranquillity of this nation,' which they thought to be considerations of some moment. To provide for these objects, and therefore to exclude for ever the Old Jewry doctrine of 'a right to choose our own governors,' they follow with 10 a clause, containing a most solemn pledge, taken from the preceding act of Queen Elizabeth, as solemn a pledge as ever was or can be given in favour of an hereditary succession, and as solemn a renunciation as could be made of the principles by this society imputed to them. 'The lords spiritual and temporal, and commons, do, in the name of all the people aforesaid, most humbly and faithfully submit *themselves, their heirs and posterities for ever*; and do faithfully promise, that they will stand to, maintain, and defend their said majesties, and also the *limitation of the 20 crown*, herein specified and contained, to the utmost of their powers,' &c. &c.

So far is it from being true, that we acquired a right by the Revolution to elect our kings, that if we had possessed it before, the English nation did at that time most solemnly renounce and abdicate it, for themselves and for all their posterity for ever. These gentlemen may value themselves as much as they please on their whig principles; but I never desire to be thought a better whig than Lord Somers; or to understand the principles of the Revolution better than 30 those by whom it was brought about; or to read in the declaration of right any mysteries unknown to those whose penetrating style has engraved in our ordinances, and in our hearts, the words and spirit of that immortal law.

It is true that, aided with the powers derived from force and opportunity, the nation was at that time, in some sense,

free to take what course it pleased for filling the throne; but only free to do so upon the same grounds on which they might have wholly abolished their monarchy, and every other part of their constitution. However they did not think such bold changes within their commission. It is indeed difficult, perhaps impossible, to give limits to the mere *abstract* competence of the supreme power, such as was exercised by parliament at that time; but the limits of a *moral* competence, subjecting, even in powers more indisputably sovereign, 10 occasional will to permanent reason, and to the steady maxims of faith, justice, and fixed fundamental policy, are perfectly intelligible, and perfectly binding upon those who exercise any authority, under any name, or under any title, in the state. The house of lords, for instance, is not morally competent to dissolve the house of commons; no, nor even to dissolve itself, nor to abdicate, if it would, its portion in the legislature of the kingdom. Though a king may abdicate for his own person, he cannot abdicate for the monarchy. By as strong, or by a stronger reason, the house of commons 20 cannot renounce its share of authority. The engagement and pact of society, which generally goes by the name of the constitution, forbids such invasion and such surrender. The constituent parts of a state are obliged to hold their public faith with each other, and with all those who derive any serious interest under their engagements, as much as the whole state is bound to keep its faith with separate communities. Otherwise competence and power would soon be confounded, and no law be left but the will of a prevailing force. On this principle the succession of the crown has 30 always been what it now is, an hereditary succession by law: in the old line it was a succession by the common law; in the new, by the statute law, operating on the principles of the common law, not changing the substance, but regulating the mode, and describing the persons. Both these descriptions of law are of the same force, and are derived from an equal authority, emanating from the common agree-

ment and original compact of the state, *communi sponsione reipublicæ*, and as such are equally binding on king, and people too, as long as the terms are observed, and they continue the same body politic.

It is far from impossible to reconcile, if we do not suffer ourselves to be entangled in the mazes of metaphysic sophistry, the use both of a fixed rule and an occasional deviation ; the sacredness of an hereditary principle of succession in our government, with a power of change in its application in cases of extreme emergency. Even in that 10 extremity (if we take the measure of our rights by our exercise of them at the Revolution) the change is to be confined to the peccant part only ; to the part which produced the necessary deviation ; and even then it is to be effected without a decomposition of the whole civil and political mass, for the purpose of originating a new civil order out of the first elements of society.

A state without the means of some change is without the means of its conservation. Without such means it might even risk the loss of that part of the constitution which 20 it wished the most religiously to preserve. The two principles of conservation and correction operated strongly at the two critical periods of the Restoration and Revolution, when England found itself without a king. At both those periods the nation had lost the bond of union in their ancient edifice ; they did not, however, dissolve the whole fabric. On the contrary, in both cases they regenerated the deficient part of the old constitution through the parts which were not impaired. They kept these old parts exactly as they were, that the part recovered might be suited to them. 30 They acted by the ancient organized states in the shape of their old organization, and not by the organic *moleculæ* of a disbanded people. At no time, perhaps, did the sovereign legislature manifest a more tender regard to their fundamental principle of British constitutional policy, than at the time of the Revolution, when it deviated from the direct line

of hereditary succession. The crown was carried somewhat out of the line in which it had before moved ; but the new line was derived from the same stock. It was still a line of hereditary descent ; still an hereditary descent in the same blood, though an hereditary descent qualified with protestantism. When the legislature altered the direction, but kept the principle, they shewed that they held it inviolable.

On this principle, the law of inheritance had admitted some amendment in the old time, and long before the æra  
10 of the Revolution. Some time after the conquest great questions arose upon the legal principles of hereditary descent. It became a matter of doubt, whether the heir *per capita* or the heir *per stirpes* was to succeed ; but whether the heir *per capita* gave way when the heirdom *per stirpes* took place, or the Catholic heir, when the Protestant was preferred, the inheritable principle survived with a sort of immortality through all transmigrations—*multosque per annos stat fortuna domus et avi numerantur avorum* :

[The race and realm from age to age remain,

20 And time but lengthens with new links the chain.]

This is the spirit of our constitution, not only in its settled course, but in all its revolutions. Whoever came in, or however he came in, whether he obtained the crown by law, or by force, the hereditary succession was either continued or adopted.

The gentlemen of the Society for Revolutions see nothing in that of 1688 but the deviation from the constitution ; and they take the deviation from the principle for the principle. They have little regard to the obvious consequences of  
30 their doctrine, though they must see, that it leaves positive authority in very few of the positive institutions of this country. When such an unwarrantable maxim is once established, that no throne is lawful but the elective, no one act of the princes who preceded the æra of fictitious election can be valid. Do these theorists mean to imitate some of their predecessors, who dragged the bodies of our

ancient sovereigns out of the quiet of their tombs? Do they mean to attain and disable backwards all the kings that have reigned before the Revolution, and consequently to stain the throne of England with the blot of a continual usurpation? Do they mean to invalidate, annul, or to call into question, together with the titles of the whole line of our kings, that great body of our statute law which passed under those whom they treat as usurpers? to annul laws of inestimable value to our liberties—of as great value at least as any which have passed at or since the period of 10 the Revolution? If kings, who did not owe their crown to the choice of their people, had no title to make laws, what will become of the statute *de tallagio non concedendo*?—of the *petition of right*?—of the act of *habeas corpus*? Do these new doctors of the rights of men presume to assert, that King James the Second, who came to the crown as next of blood, according to the rules of a then unqualified succession, was not to all intents and purposes a lawful king of England, before he had done any of those acts which were justly construed into an abdication of his 20 crown? If he was not, much trouble in parliament might have been saved at the period these gentlemen commemorate. But King James was a bad king with a good title, and not an usurper. The princes who succeeded according to the act of parliament which settled the crown on the electress Sophia and on her descendants, being Protestants, came in as much by a title of inheritance as King James did. He came in according to the law, as it stood at his accession to the crown; and the princes of the House of Brunswick came to the inheritance of the crown, not by election, but 30 by the law, as it stood at their several accessions of Protestant descent and inheritance, as I hope I have shewn sufficiently.

The law by which this royal family is specifically destined to the succession, is the act of the 12th and 13th of King William. The terms of this act bind 'us and our heirs, and

our *posterity*, to them, their *heirs*, and their *posterity*,’ being Protestants, to the end of time, in the same words as the declaration of right had bound us to the heirs of King William and Queen Mary. It therefore secures both an hereditary crown and an hereditary allegiance. On what ground, except the constitutional policy of forming an establishment to secure that kind of succession which is to preclude a choice of the people for ever, could the legislature have fastidiously rejected the fair and abundant choice which our own country  
 10 presented to them, and searched in strange lands for a foreign princess, from whose womb the line of our future rulers were to derive their title to govern millions of men through a series of ages?

The Princess Sophia was named in the Act of Settlement of the 12th and 13th of King William, for a *stock* and root of *inheritance* to our kings, and not for her merits as a temporary administratrix of a power, which she might not, and in fact did not, herself ever exercise. She was adopted for one reason, and for one only, because, says the act, ‘the most  
 20 excellent Princess Sophia, Electress and Duchess Dowager of Hanover, is *daughter* of the most excellent Princess Elizabeth, late Queen of Bohemia, *daughter* of our late *sovereign* lord King James the First, of happy memory, and is hereby declared to be the next in *succession* in the Protestant line,’ &c. &c.; ‘and the crown shall continue to the *heirs* of her body, being Protestants.’ This limitation was made by Parliament, that through the Princess Sophia an inheritable line, not only was to be continued in future but (what they thought very material) that through her it was to be con-  
 30 nected with the old stock of inheritance in King James the First; in order that the monarchy might preserve an unbroken unity through all ages, and might be preserved, with safety to our religion, in the old approved mode by descent, in which, if our liberties had been once endangered, they had often, through all storms and struggles of prerogative and privilege, been preserved. They did well. No experience

has taught us, that in any other course or method than that of an *hereditary crown*, our liberties can be regularly perpetuated and preserved sacred as our *hereditary right*. An irregular, convulsive movement may be necessary to throw off an irregular, convulsive disease. But the course of succession is the healthy habit of the British constitution. Was it that the legislature wanted, at the act for the limitation of the crown in the Hanoverian line, drawn through the female descendants of James the First, a due sense of the inconveniences of having two or three, or possibly more, foreigners in 10 succession to the British throne? No! They had a due sense of the evils which might happen from such foreign rule, and more than a due sense of them. But a more decisive proof cannot be given of the full conviction of the British nation, that the principles of the Revolution did not authorize them to elect kings at their pleasure, and without any attention to the ancient fundamental principles of our government, than their continuing to adopt a plan of hereditary Protestant succession in the old line, with all the dangers and all the inconveniences of its being a foreign line full before their eyes, 20. and operating with the utmost force upon their minds.

A few years ago I should be ashamed to overload a matter, so capable of supporting itself, by the then unnecessary support of any argument; but this seditious, unconstitutional doctrine is now publicly taught, avowed, and printed. The dislike I feel to revolutions, the signals for which have so often been given from pulpits; the spirit of change that is gone abroad; the total contempt which prevails with you, and may come to prevail with us, of all ancient institutions, when set in opposition to a present sense of convenience, or to the 30 bent of a present inclination: all these considerations make it not unadvisable, in my opinion, to call back our attention to the true principles of our own domestic laws; that you, my French friend, should begin to know, and that we should continue to cherish them. We ought not, on either side of the water, to suffer ourselves to be imposed upon by the

counterfeit wares which some persons, by a double fraud, export to you in illicit bottoms as raw commodities of British growth, though wholly alien to our soil, in order afterwards to smuggle them back again into this country, manufactured after the newest Paris fashion of an improved liberty.

The people of England will not ape the fashions they have never tried ; nor go back to those which they have found mischievous on trial. They look upon the legal hereditary succession of their crown as among their rights, not as among  
10 their wrongs ; as a benefit, not as a grievance ; as a security for their liberty, not as a badge of servitude. They look on the frame of their commonwealth, *such as it stands*, to be of inestimable value ; and they conceive the undisturbed succession of the crown to be a pledge of the stability and perpetuity of all the other members of our constitution.

I shall beg leave, before I go any further, to take notice of some paltry artifices, which the abettors of election as the only lawful title to the crown, are ready to employ, in order to render the support of the just principles of our constitution a task somewhat invidious. These sophisters substitute  
20 a fictitious cause, and feigned personages, in whose favour they suppose you engaged, whenever you defend the inheritable nature of the crown. It is common with them to dispute as if they were in a conflict with some of those exploded fanatics of slavery, who formerly maintained, what I believe no creature now maintains, 'that the crown is held by divine, hereditary, and indefeasible right.'—These old fanatics of single arbitrary power dogmatized as if hereditary royalty was the only lawful government in the world, just as our new  
30 fanatics of popular arbitrary power maintain that a popular election is the sole lawful source of authority. The old prerogative enthusiasts, it is true, did speculate foolishly, and perhaps impiously too, as if monarchy had more of a divine sanction than any other mode of government ; and as if a right to govern by inheritance were in strictness *indefeasible* in every person, who should be found in the succession to a



throne, and under every circumstance, which no civil or political right can be. But an absurd opinion concerning the king's hereditary right to the crown does not prejudice one that is rational, and bottomed upon solid principles of law and policy. If all the absurd theories of lawyers and divines were to vitiate the objects in which they are conversant, we should have no law, and no religion, left in the world. But an absurd theory on one side of a question forms no justification for alleging a false fact, or promulgating mischievous maxims, on the other. 10

THE second claim of the Revolution Society is 'a right of cashiering their governors for *misconduct*.' Perhaps the apprehensions our ancestors entertained of forming such a precedent as that 'of cashiering for misconduct,' was the cause that the declaration of the act which implied the abdication of King James, was, if it had any fault, rather too guarded, and too circumstantial.\* But all this guard, and all this accumulation of circumstances, serves to shew the spirit of caution which predominated in the national councils, in a situation in which men irritated by oppression, and 20 elevated by a triumph over it, are apt to abandon themselves to violent and extreme courses : it shews the anxiety of the great men who influenced the conduct of affairs at that great event, to make the Revolution a parent of settlement, and not a nursery of future revolutions.

No government could stand a moment, if it could be blown down with anything so loose and indefinite as an opinion of '*misconduct*.' They who led at the Revolution, grounded the virtual abdication of King James upon no such light and uncertain principle. They charged him 30

\* 'That King James the second, having endeavoured to *subvert the constitution* of the kingdom; by breaking the *original contract* between king and people, and by the advice of jesuits, and other wicked persons, having violated the *fundamental laws*, and *having withdrawn himself out of the kingdom*, hath *abdicated* the government, and the throne is thereby *vacant*.'

with nothing less than a design, confirmed by a multitude of illegal overt acts, to *subvert the Protestant church and state*, and their *fundamental*, unquestionable laws and liberties: they charged him with having broken the *original contract* between king and people. This was more than *misconduct*. A grave and over-ruling necessity obliged them to take the step they took, and took with infinite reluctance, as under that most rigorous of all laws. Their trust for the future preservation of the constitution was  
10 not in future revolutions. The grand policy of all their regulations was to render it almost impracticable for any future sovereign to compel the states of the kingdom to have again recourse to those violent remedies. They left the crown what, in the eye and estimation of law, it had ever been, perfectly irresponsible. In order to lighten the crown still further, they aggravated responsibility on ministers of state. By the statute of the 1st of king William, sess. 2nd, called '*the act for declaring the rights and liberties of the subject, and for settling the succession of the crown*,' they  
20 enacted, that the ministers should serve the crown on the terms of that declaration. They secured soon after the *frequent meetings of parliament*, by which the whole government would be under the constant inspection and active control of the popular representatives and of the magnates of the kingdom. In the next great constitutional act, that of the 12th and 13th of King William, for the further limitation of the crown, and *better* securing the rights and liberties of the subject, they provided, 'that no pardon under the great seal of England should be pleadable to  
30 impeachment by the commons in parliament.' The rule laid down for government in the Declaration of Right, the constant inspection of parliament, the 'practical claim of impeachment, they thought infinitely a better security not only for their constitutional liberty, but against the vices of administration, than the reservation of a right so difficult in the practice, so uncertain in the issue, and often so

mischievous in the consequences, as that of 'cashiering their governors.'

Dr. Price, in this sermon,\* condemns very properly the practice of gross, adulatory addresses to kings. Instead of this fulsome style, he proposes that his majesty should be told, on occasions of congratulation, that 'he is to consider himself as more properly the servant than the sovereign of his people.' For a compliment, this new form of address does not seem to be very soothing. Those who are servants, in name, as well as in effect, do not like to be told of their 10 situation, their duty, and their obligations. The slave, in the old play, tells his master, '*Hæc commemoratio est quasi exprobratio.*' [*This reminder sounds like a reproach.*] It is not pleasant as compliment; it is not wholesome as instruction. After all, if the king were to bring himself to echo this new kind of address, to adopt it in terms, and even to take the appellation of Servant of the People as his royal style, how either he or we should be much mended by it, I cannot imagine. I have seen very assuming letters, signed, 'Your most obedient, humble servant.' The proudest domination 20 that ever was endured on earth took a title of still greater humility than that which is now proposed for sovereigns by the Apostle of Liberty. Kings and nations were trampled upon by the foot of one calling himself 'the Servant of Servants;' and mandates for deposing sovereigns were sealed with the signet of 'the Fisherman.'

I should have considered all this as no more than a sort of flippant vain discourse, in which, as in an unsavoury fume, several persons suffer the spirit of liberty to evaporate, if it were not plainly in support of the idea, and a part of the 30 scheme, of 'cashiering kings for misconduct.' In that light it is worth some observation.

Kings, in one sense, are undoubtedly the servants of the people, because their power has no other rational end than that of the general advantage; but it is not true that they are,

\* P. 22, 23, 24.

in the ordinary sense (by our constitution, at least) any thing like servants; the essence of whose situation is to obey the commands of some other, and to be removeable at pleasure. But the king of Great Britain obeys no other person; all other persons are individually, and collectively too, under him, and owe to him a legal obedience. The law, which knows neither to flatter nor to insult, calls this high magistrate, not our servant, as this humble Divine calls him, but '*our sovereign Lord the King*;' and we, on our parts, have learned to  
 10 speak only the primitive language of the law, and not the confused jargon of their Babylonian pulpits.

As he is not to obey us, but as we are to obey the law in him, our constitution has made no sort of provision towards rendering him, as a servant, in any degree responsible. Our constitution knows nothing of a magistrate like the *Justicia* of Arragon; nor of any court legally appointed, nor of any process legally settled for submitting the king to the responsibility belonging to all servants. In this he is not distinguished from the commons and the lords; who, in their  
 20 several public capacities, can never be called to an account for their conduct; although the Revolution Society chooses to assert, in direct opposition to one of the wisest and most beautiful parts of our constitution, that 'a king is no more than the first servant of the public, created by it, and responsible to it.'

Ill would our ancestors at the Revolution have deserved their fame for wisdom, if they had found no security for their freedom, but in rendering their government feeble in its operations, and precarious in its tenure; if they had been  
 30 able to contrive no better remedy against arbitrary power than civil confusion. Let these gentlemen state who that *representative* public is to whom they will affirm the king, as a servant, to be responsible. It will be then time enough for me to produce to them the positive statute law which affirms that he is not.

The ceremony of cashiering kings, of which these gentle-

men talk so much at their ease, can rarely, if ever, be performed without force. It then becomes a case of war, and not of constitution. Laws are commanded to hold their tongues amongst arms; and tribunals fall to the ground with the peace they are no longer able to uphold. The Revolution of 1688 was obtained by a just war, in the only case in which any war, and much more a civil war, can be just. 'Justa bella quibus necessaria' [*Wars are just when they are unavoidable*]. The question of dethroning, or, if these gentlemen like the phrase better, 'cashiering' kings, will 10 always be, as it has always been, an extraordinary question of state, and wholly out of the law; a question (like all other questions of state) of dispositions, and of means, and of probable consequences, rather than of positive rights. As it was not made for common abuses, so it is not to be agitated by common minds. The speculative line of demarcation, where obedience ought to end, and resistance must begin, is faint, obscure, and not easily definable. It is not a single act, or a single event, which determines it. Governments must be abused and deranged indeed, before it 20 can be thought of; and the prospect of the future must be as bad as the experience of the past. When things are in that lamentable condition, the nature of the disease is to indicate the remedy to those whom nature has qualified to administer in extremities this critical, ambiguous, bitter potion to a distempered state. Times and occasions, and provocations, will teach their own lessons. The wise will determine from the gravity of the case; the irritable from sensibility to oppression; the high-minded from disdain and indignation at abusive power in unworthy hands; the brave 30 and bold from the love of honourable danger in a generous cause: but, with or without right, a revolution will be the very last resource of the thinking and the good.

THE third head of right, asserted by the pulpit of the Old Jewry, namely, the 'right to form a government for our-

selves,' has, at least, as little countenance from any thing done at the Revolution, either in precedent or principle, as the two first of their claims. The Revolution was made to preserve our *ancient* indisputable laws and liberties, and that *ancient* constitution of government which is our only security for law and liberty. If you are desirous of knowing the spirit of our constitution, and the policy which predominated in that great period which has secured it to this hour, pray look for both in our histories, in our records, in our acts of  
 10 parliament, and journals of parliament, and not in the sermons of the Old Jewry, and the after-dinner toasts of the Revolution Society. In the former you will find other ideas and another language. Such a claim is as ill-suited to our temper and wishes as it is unsupported by any appearance of authority. The very idea of the fabrication of a new government is enough to fill us with disgust and horror. We wished at the period of the Revolution, and do now wish, to derive all we possess as *an inheritance from our forefathers*. Upon that body and stock of inheritance we have taken care not to  
 20 inoculate any scion alien to the nature of the original plant. All the reformation we have hitherto made, have proceeded upon the principle of reference to antiquity; and I hope, nay I am persuaded, that all those which possibly may be made hereafter, will be carefully formed upon analogical precedent, authority, and example.

Our oldest reformation is that of Magna Charta. You will see that Sir Edward Coke, that great oracle of our law, and indeed all the great men who follow him, to Blackstone,\* are industrious to prove the pedigree of our liberties. They  
 30 endeavour to prove, that the ancient charter, the Magna Charta of King John, was connected with another positive charter from Henry I. and that both the one and the other were nothing more than a re-affirmance of the still more ancient standing law of the kingdom. In the matter of fact, for the greater part, these authors appear to be in the right;

\* See Blackstone's Magna Charta, printed at Oxford, 1759.

perhaps not always : but if the lawyers mistake in some particulars, it proves my position still the more strongly ; because it demonstrates the powerful prepossession towards antiquity, with which the minds of all our lawyers and legislators, and of all the people whom they wish to influence, have been always filled ; and the stationary policy of this kingdom in considering their most sacred rights and franchises as an *inheritance*.

In the famous law of the 3rd of Charles I. called the *Petition of Right*, the parliament says to the king, 'Your 10 subjects have *inherited* this freedom,' claiming their franchises, not on abstract principles as the 'rights of men,' but as the rights of Englishmen, and as a patrimony derived from their forefathers. Selden, and the other profoundly learned men, who drew this petition of right, were as well acquainted, at least, with all the general theories concerning the 'rights of men,' as any of the discourses in our pulpits, or on your tribune ; full as well as Dr. Price, or as the Abbé Sieyès. But, for reasons worthy of that practical wisdom which superseded their theoretic science, they preferred this posi- 20 tive, recorded, *hereditary* title to all which can be dear to the man and the citizen, to that vague speculative right, which exposed their sure inheritance to be scrambled for and torn to pieces by every wild litigious spirit.

The same policy pervades all the laws which have since been made for the preservation of our liberties. In the 1st of William and Mary, in the famous statute, called the Declaration of Right, the two houses utter not a syllable of 'a right to frame a government for themselves.' You will see, that their whole care was to secure the religion, laws, 30 and liberties, that had been long possessed, and had been lately endangered. 'Taking\* into their most serious consideration the *best* means for making such an establishment, that their religion, laws, and liberties might not be in danger of being again subverted,' they auspicate all their proceedings,

\* 1 W. and M.

by stating as some of those *best means*, 'in the *first place*' to do 'as their *ancestors in like cases have usually* done for vindicating their *ancient* rights and liberties, to *declare*;'—and then they pray the king and queen, 'that it may be *declared* and enacted, that *all and singular* the rights and liberties *asserted and declared* are the true *ancient* and indubitable rights and liberties of the people of this kingdom.'

You will observe, that from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Right, it has been the uniform policy of our  
 10 constitution to claim and assert our liberties, as an *entailed inheritance* derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves an unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and an house of commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties, from a long line of ancestors.

20 This policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper and confined views. People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors. Besides, the people of England well know, that the idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation, and a sure principle of transmission; without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquisition free; but it secures what it acquires.

30 Whatever advantages are obtained by a state proceeding on these maxims, are locked fast as in a sort of family settlement; grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever. By a constitutional policy, working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we transmit our government and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives. The institutions of policy, the



goods of fortune, the gifts of Providence, are handed down, to us and from us, in the same course and order. Our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole, at one time, is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenour of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve, we are never wholly new; in what we retain we are never wholly obsolete. By adhering in this manner and on those principles to our forefathers, we are guided not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood; binding up the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.

Through the same plan of a conformity to nature in our artificial institutions, and by calling in the aid of her unerring and powerful instincts, to fortify the fallible and feeble contrivances of our reason, we have derived several other, and those no small benefits, from considering our liberties in the light of an inheritance. Always acting as if in the presence of canonized forefathers, the spirit of freedom, leading in itself to misrule and excess, is tempered with an awful gravity. This idea of a liberal descent inspires us with a sense of habitual native dignity, which prevents that upstart insolence almost inevitably adhering to and disgracing those who are the first acquirers of any distinction. By this means our liberty becomes a noble freedom. It carries an imposing

and majestic aspect. It has a pedigree and illustrating ancestors. It has its bearings and its ensigns armorial. It has its gallery of portraits ; its monumental inscriptions ; its records, evidences, and titles. We procure reverence to our civil institutions on the principle upon which nature teaches us to revere individual men ; on account of their age ; and on account of those from whom they are descended. All your sophisters cannot produce any thing better adapted to preserve a rational and manly freedom than the course that we  
10 have pursued, who have chosen our nature rather than our speculations, our breasts rather than our inventions, for the great conservatories and magazines of our rights and privileges.

You might, if you pleased, have profited of our example, and have given to your recovered freedom a correspondent dignity. Your privileges, though discontinued, were not lost to memory. Your constitution, it is true, whilst you were out of possession, suffered waste and dilapidation ; but you possessed in some parts the walls, and in all the foundations,  
20 of a noble and venerable castle. You might have repaired those walls ; you might have built on those old foundations. Your constitution was suspended before it was perfected ; but you had the elements of a constitution very nearly as good as could be wished. In your old states you possessed that variety of parts corresponding with the various descriptions of which your community was happily composed ; you had all that combination, and all that opposition of interests, you had that action and counteraction which, in the natural and in the political world, from the reciprocal struggle of dis-  
30 cordant powers, draws out the harmony of the universe. These opposed and conflicting interests, which you considered as so great a blemish in your old and in our present constitution, interpose a salutary check to all precipitate resolutions ; they render deliberation a matter not of choice, but of necessity ; they make all change a subject of *compromise*,

which naturally begets moderation ; they produce *témperaments*, preventing the sore evil of harsh, crude, unqualified reformations ; and rendering all the headlong exertions of arbitrary power, in the few or in the many, for ever impracticable. Through that diversity of members and interests, general liberty had as many securities as there were separate views in the several orders ; whilst by pressing down the whole by the weight of a real monarchy, the separate parts would have been prevented from warping and starting from their allotted places. 10

You had all these advantages in your ancient states ; but you chose to act as if you had never been moulded into civil society, and had everything to begin anew. You began ill, because you began by despising everything that belonged to you. You set up your trade without a capital. If the last generations of your country appeared without much lustre in your eyes, you might have passed them by, and derived your claims from a more early race of ancestors. Under a pious predilection for those ancestors, your imaginations would have realized in them a standard of virtue and wisdom, beyond the 20 vulgar practice of the hour and you would have risen with the example to whose imitation you aspired. Respecting your forefathers, you would have been taught to respect yourselves. You would not have chosen to consider the French as a people of yesterday, as a nation of low-born servile wretches until the emancipating year of 1789. In order to furnish, at the expense of your honour, an excuse to your apologists here for several enormities of yours, you would not have been content to be represented as a gang of Maroon slaves, suddenly broke loose from the house of bondage, and therefore to be 30 pardoned for your abuse of the liberty to which you were not accustomed and ill fitted. Would it not, my worthy friend, have been wiser to have you thought, what I, for one, always thought you, a generous and gallant nation, long misled to your disadvantage by your high and romantic sentiments of fidelity, honour, and loyalty ; that events had been unfavour-

able to you, but that you were not enslaved through any illiberal or servile disposition ; that in your most devoted submission, you were actuated by a principle of public spirit, and that it was your country you worshipped, in the person of your king? Had you made it to be understood, that in the delusion of this amiable error you had gone further than your wise ancestors ; that you were resolved to resume your ancient privileges, whilst you preserved the spirit of your ancient and your recent loyalty and honour ; or, if diffident  
 10 of yourselves, and not clearly discerning the almost obliterated constitution of your ancestors, you had looked to your neighbours in this land, who had kept alive the ancient principles and models of the old common law of Europe meliorated and adapted to its present state—by following wise examples you would have given new examples of wisdom to the world. You would have rendered the cause of liberty venerable in the eyes of every worthy mind in every nation. You would have shamed despotism from the earth, by showing that freedom was not only reconcilable, but as, when well disciplined  
 20 it is, auxiliary to law. You would have had an unoppressive but a productive revenue. You would have had a flourishing commerce to feed it. You would have had a free constitution ; a potent monarchy ; a disciplined army ; a reformed and venerated clergy ; a mitigated, but spirited nobility, to lead your virtue, not to overlay it ; you would have had a liberal order of commons, to emulate and to recruit that nobility ; you would have had a protected, satisfied, laborious, and obedient people, taught to seek and to recognize the happiness that is to be found by virtue in all conditions ; in which con-  
 30 sists the true moral equality of mankind, and not in that monstrous fiction, which, by inspiring false ideas and vain expectations into men destined to travel in the obscure walk of laborious life, serves only to aggravate and embitter that real inequality, which it never can remove ; and which the order of civil life establishes as much for the benefit of those whom it must leave in an humble state, as those whom it is

able to exalt to a condition more splendid, but not more happy. You had a smooth and easy career of felicity and glory laid open to you, beyond anything recorded in the history of the world ; but you have shewn that difficulty is good for man.

Compute your gains : see what is got by those extravagant and presumptuous speculations which have taught your leaders to despise all their predecessors, and all their contemporaries, and even to despise themselves, until the moment in which they became truly despicable. By following those 10 false lights, France has bought undisguised calamities at a higher price than any nation has purchased the most unequivocal blessings. France has bought poverty by crime ! France has not sacrificed her virtue to her interest ; but she has abandoned her interest, that she might prostitute her virtue. All other nations have begun the fabric of a new government, or the reformation of an old, by establishing originally, or by enforcing with greater exactness, some rites or other of religion. All other people have laid the foundations of civil freedom in severer manners, and a system of a more austere 20 and masculine morality. France, when she let loose the reins of regal authority, doubled the licence of a ferocious dissoluteness in manners, and of an insolent irreligion in opinions and practices ; and has extended through all ranks of life, as if she were communicating some privilege, or laying open some secluded benefit, all the unhappy corruptions that usually were the disease of wealth and power. This is one of the new principles of equality in France.

France, by the perfidy of her leaders, has utterly disgraced the tone of lenient council in the cabinets of princes, and 30 disarmed it of its most potent topics. She has sanctified the dark suspicious maxims of tyrannous distrust ; and taught kings to tremble at (what will hereafter be called) the delusive plausibilities of moral politicians. Sovereigns will consider those who advise them to place an unlimited confidence in their people, as subverters of their thrones ; as

traitors who aim at their destruction, by leading their easy good-nature, under specious pretences, to admit combinations of bold and faithless men into a participation of their power. This alone, if there were nothing else, is an irreparable calamity to you and to mankind. Remember that your parliament of Paris told your king, that in calling the states together, he had nothing to fear but the prodigal excess of their zeal in providing for the support of the throne. It is right that these men should hide their heads. It is right that  
10 they should bear their part in the ruin which their counsel has brought on their sovereign and their country. Such sanguine declarations tend to lull authority asleep ; to encourage it rashly to engage in perilous adventures of untried policy ; to neglect those provisions, preparations, and precautions, which distinguish benevolence from imbecility ; and without which no man can answer for the salutary effect of any abstract plan of government or of freedom. For want of these, they have seen the medicine of the state corrupted into its poison. They have seen the French rebel against a mild and lawful  
20 monarch, with more fury, outrage, and insult, than ever any people has been known to rise against the most illegal usurper, or the most sanguinary tyrant. Their resistance was made to concession ; their revolt was from protection ; their blow was aimed at an hand holding out graces, favours, and immunities.

This was unnatural. The rest is in order. They have found their punishment in their success. Laws overturned ; tribunals subverted ; industry without vigour ; commerce expiring ; the revenue unpaid, yet the people impoverished ;  
30 a church pillaged, and a state not relieved ; civil and military anarchy made the constitution of the kingdom ; every thing human and divine sacrificed to the idol of public credit, and national bankruptcy the consequence ; and to crown all, the paper securities of new, precarious, tottering power, the discredited paper securities of impoverished fraud, and beggared rapine, held out as a currency for the support of

an empire, in lieu of the two great recognised species that represent the lasting conventional credit of mankind, which disappeared and hid themselves in the earth from whence they came, when the principle of property, whose creatures and representatives they are, was systematically subverted.

Were all these dreadful things necessary? Were they the inevitable results of the desperate struggle of determined patriots, compelled to wade through blood and tumult, to the quiet shore of a tranquil and prosperous liberty? No! 10 nothing like it. The fresh ruins of France, which shock our feelings wherever we can turn our eyes, are not the devastation of civil war; they are the sad but instructive monuments of rash and ignorant counsel in time of profound peace. They are the display of inconsiderate and presumptuous, because unresisted and irresistible authority. The persons who have thus squandered away the precious treasure of their crimes, the persons who have made this prodigal and wild waste of public evils (the last stake reserved for the ultimate ransom of the state) have met in their progress with 20 little, or rather with no opposition at all. Their whole march was more like a triumphal procession than the progress of a war. Their pioneers have gone before them, and demolished and laid every thing level at their feet. Not one drop of *their* blood have they shed in the cause of the country they have ruined. They have made no sacrifices to their projects of greater consequence than their shoebuckles, whilst they were imprisoning their king, murdering their fellow citizens, and bathing in tears, and plunging in poverty and distress, thousands of worthy men and worthy families. 30 Their cruelty has not even been the base result of fear. It has been the effect of their sense of perfect safety, in authorizing treasons, robberies, rapes, assassinations, slaughters, and burnings throughout their harassed land. But the cause of all was plain from the beginning.

This unforced choice, this fond election of evil, would

appear perfectly unaccountable, if we did not consider the composition of the National Assembly ; I do not mean its formal constitution, which, as it now stands, is exceptionable enough, but the materials of which in a great measure it is composed, which is of ten thousand times greater consequence than all the formalities in the world. If we were to know nothing of this Assembly but by its title and function, no colours could paint to the imagination any thing more venerable. In that light the mind of an enquirer, subdued  
 10 by such an awful image as that of the virtue and wisdom of a whole people collected into a focus, would pause and hesitate in condemning things even of the very worst aspect. Instead of blameable, they would appear only mysterious. But no name, no power, no function, no artificial institution whatsoever, can make the men of whom any system of authority is composed, any other than God, and nature, and education, and their habits of life have made them. Capacities beyond these the people have not to give. Virtue and wisdom may be the objects of their choice ; but their choice  
 20 confers neither the one nor the other on those upon whom they lay their ordaining hands. They have not the engagement of nature, they have not the promise of revelation for any such powers.

AFTER I had read over the list of the persons and descriptions elected into the *Tiers Etat*, nothing which they afterwards did could appear astonishing. Among them, indeed, I saw some of known rank ; some of shining talents ; but of any practical experience in the state, not one man was to be found. The best were only men of theory. But  
 30 whatever the distinguished few may have been, it is the substance and mass of the body which constitutes its character, and must finally determine its direction. In all bodies, those who will lead, must also, in a considerable degree, follow. They must conform their propositions to the taste, talent, and disposition of those whom they wish to conduct : there-



fore, if an Assembly is viciously or feebly composed in a very great part of it, nothing but such a supreme degree of virtue as very rarely appears in the world, and for that reason cannot enter into calculation, will prevent the men of talents disseminated through it from becoming only the expert instruments of absurd projects. If, what is the more likely event, instead of that unusual degree of virtue, they should be actuated by sinister ambition and a lust of meretricious glory, then the feeble part of the Assembly, to whom at first they conform, becomes in its turn the dupe and 10 instrument of their designs. In this political traffic the leaders will be obliged to bow to the ignorance of their followers, and the followers to become subservient to the worst designs of their leaders.

To secure any degree of sobriety in the propositions made by the leaders in any public assembly, they ought to respect, in some degree perhaps to fear, those whom they conduct. To be led any otherwise than blindly, the followers must be qualified, if not for actors, at least for judges ; they must also be judges of natural weight and authority. Nothing can 20 secure a steady and moderate conduct in such assemblies, but that the body of them should be respectably composed, in point of condition in life, of permanent property, of education, and of such habits as enlarge and liberalize the understanding.

In the calling of the states general of France, the first thing which struck me, was a great departure from the ancient course. I found the representation for the Third Estate composed of six hundred persons. They were equal in number to the representatives of both of the other orders. 30 If the orders were to act separately, the number would not, beyond the consideration of the expense, be of much moment. But when it became apparent that the three orders were to be melted down into one, the policy and necessary effect of this numerous representation became obvious. A very small desertion from either of the other two

orders must throw the power of both into the hands of the third. In fact, the whole power of the state was soon resolved into that body. Its due composition became therefore of infinitely the greater importance.

Judge, Sir, of my surprise, when I found that a very great proportion of the Assembly (a majority, I believe, of the members who attended) was composed of practitioners in the law. It was composed not of distinguished magistrates, who had given pledges to their country of their science, prudence, 10 and integrity ; not of leading advocates, the glory of the bar ; not of renowned professors in universities ;—but for the far greater part, as it must in such a number, of the inferior, unlearned, mechanical, merely instrumental members of the profession. There were distinguished exceptions ; but the general composition was of obscure provincial advocates, of stewards of petty local jurisdictions, country attornies, notaries, and the whole train of the ministers of municipal litigation, the fomentors and conductors of the petty war of village vexation. From the moment I read the list I saw distinctly, 20 and very nearly as it has happened, all that was to follow.

The degree of estimation in which any profession is held becomes the standard of the estimation in which the professors hold themselves. Whatever the personal merits of many individual lawyers might have been, and in many it was undoubtedly very considerable, in that military kingdom, no part of the profession had been much regarded, except the highest of all, who often united to their professional offices great family splendour, and were invested with great power and authority. These certainly were highly respected, and 30 even with no small degree of awe. The next rank was not much esteemed ; the mechanical part was in a very low degree of repute.

Whenever the supreme authority is invested in a body so composed, it must evidently produce the consequences of supreme authority placed in the hands of men not taught habitually to respect themselves ; who had no previous

fortune in character at stake ; who could not be expected to bear with moderation, or to conduct with discretion, a power which they themselves, more than any others, must be surprised to find in their hands. Who could flatter himself that these men, suddenly, and, as it were, by enchantment, snatched from the humblest rank of subordination, would not be intoxicated with their unprepared greatness ? Who could conceive, that men who are habitually meddling, daring, subtle, active, of litigious dispositions and unquiet minds, would easily fall back into their old condition of 10 obscure contention, and laborious, low, unprofitable chicane ? Who could doubt but that, at any expense to the state, of which they understood nothing, they must pursue their private interests, which they understood but too well ? It was not an event depending on chance or contingency. It was inevitable ; it was necessary ; it was planted in the nature of things. They must *join* (if their capacity did not permit them to *lead*) in any project which could procure to them a *litigious constitution* ; which could lay open to them those innumerable lucrative jobs which follow in the train of all great 20 convulsions and revolutions in the state, and particularly in all great and violent permutations of property. Was it to be expected that they would attend to the stability of property, whose existence had always depended upon whatever rendered property questionable, ambiguous, and insecure ? Their objects would be enlarged with their elevation, but their disposition and habits, and mode of accomplishing their designs, must remain the same.

Well ! but these men were to be tempered and restrained by other descriptions, of more sober minds, and more enlarged understandings. Were they then to be awed by the super-eminent authority and awful dignity of an handful of country clowns who have seats in that Assembly, some of whom are said not to be able to read and write ? and by not a greater number of traders, who, though somewhat more instructed, and more conspicuous in the order of society,

had never known anything beyond their counting-house ? No ! both these descriptions were more formed to be overborne and swayed by the intrigues and artifices of lawyers, than to become their counterpoise. With such a dangerous disproportion, the whole must needs be governed by them. To the faculty of law was joined a pretty considerable proportion of the faculty of medicine. This faculty had not, any more than that of the law, possessed in France its just estimation. Its professors therefore must have the qualities  
 10 of men not habituated to sentiments of dignity. But supposing they had ranked as they ought to do, and as with us they do actually, the sides of sick beds are not the academies for forming statesmen and legislators. Then came the dealers in stocks and funds, who must be eager, at any expense, to change their ideal paper wealth for the more solid substance of land. To these were joined men of other descriptions, from whom as little knowledge of or attention to the interests of a great state was to be expected, and as little regard to the stability of any institution ; men formed to be instruments,  
 20 not controls. Such in general was the composition of the *Tiers Etat* in the National Assembly ; in which was scarcely to be perceived the slightest traces of what we call the natural landed interest of the country.

We know that the British house of commons, without shutting its doors to any merit in any class, is, by the sure operation of adequate causes, filled with every thing illustrious in rank, in descent, in hereditary and in acquired opulence, in cultivated talents, in military, civil, naval, and politic distinction, that the country can afford. But supposing, what  
 30 hardly can be supposed as a case, that the house of commons should be composed in the same manner with the *Tiers Etat* in France, would this dominion of chicanery be borne with patience, or even conceived without horror ? God forbid I should insinuate any thing derogatory to that profession, which is another priesthood, administering the rites of sacred justice. But whilst I revere men in the functions

which belong to them, and would do as much as one man can do, to prevent their exclusion from any, I cannot, to flatter them, give the lie to nature. They are good and useful in the composition; they must be mischievous if they preponderate so as virtually to become the whole. Their very excellence in their peculiar functions may be far from a qualification for others. It cannot escape observation, that when men are too much confined to professional and faculty habits, and, as it were, inveterate in the recurrent employment of that narrow circle, they are rather disabled than 10 qualified for whatever depends on the knowledge of mankind, on experience in mixed affairs, on a comprehensive connected view of the various complicated external and internal interests which go to the formation of that multifarious thing called a state.

After all, if the house of commons were to have an wholly professional and faculty composition, what is the power of the house of commons, circumscribed and shut in by the immoveable barriers of laws, usages, positive rules of doctrine and practice, counterpoised by the house of lords, and every 20 moment of its existence at the discretion of the crown to continue, prorogue, or dissolve us? The power of the house of commons, direct or indirect, is indeed great; and long may it be able to preserve its greatness, and the spirit belonging to true greatness, at the full; and it will do so, as long as it can keep the breakers of law in India from becoming the makers of law for England. The power, however, of the house of commons, when least diminished, is as a drop of water in the ocean, compared to that residing in a settled majority of your National Assembly. That Assembly, since the destruction 30 of the orders, has no fundamental law, no strict convention, no respected usage to restrain it. Instead of finding themselves obliged to conform to a fixed constitution, they have a power to make a constitution which shall conform to their designs. Nothing in heaven or upon earth can serve as a control on them. What ought to be the heads, the hearts,

the dispositions, that are qualified, or that dare, not only to make laws under a fixed constitution, but at one heat to strike out a totally new constitution for a great kingdom, and in every part of it, from the monarch on the throne to the vestry of a parish? But—‘*Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.*’ In such a state of unbounded power, for undefined and undefinable purposes, the evil of a moral and almost physical inaptitude of the man to the function must be the greatest we can conceive to happen in the management of  
10 human affairs.

Having considered the composition of the third estate as it stood in its original frame, I took a view of the representatives of the clergy. There too it appeared, that full as little regard was had to the general security of property, or to the aptitude of the deputies for their public purposes, in the principles of their election. That election was so contrived as to send a very large proportion of mere country curates to the great and arduous work of new-modelling a state; men who never had seen the state so much as in a picture; men  
20 who knew nothing of the world beyond the bounds of an obscure village; who, immersed in hopeless poverty, could regard all property, whether secular or ecclesiastical, with no other eye than that of envy; among whom must be many, who, for the smallest hope of the meanest dividend in plunder, would readily join in any attempts upon a body of wealth, in which they could hardly look to have any share, except in a general scramble. Instead of balancing the power of the active chicaners in the other assembly, these curates must necessarily become the active coadjutors, or at best the passive  
30 instruments of those by whom they had been habitually guided in their petty village concerns. They too could hardly be the most conscientious of their kind, who, presuming upon their incompetent understanding, could intrigue for a trust which led them from their natural relation to their flocks, and their natural spheres of action, to undertake the regeneration of kingdoms. This preponderating weight being added

to the force of the body of chicane in the Tiers Etat, completed that momentum of ignorance, rashness, presumption, and lust of plunder, which nothing has been able to resist.

To observing men it must have appeared from the beginning, that the majority of the Third Estate, in conjunction with such a deputation from the clergy as I have described, whilst it pursued the destruction of the nobility, would inevitably become subservient to the worst designs of individuals in that class. In the spoil and humiliation of their own order these individuals would possess a sure fund for the 10 pay of their new followers. To squander away the objects which made the happiness of their fellows, would be to them no sacrifice at all. Turbulent, discontented men of quality, in proportion as they are puffed up with personal pride and arrogance, generally despise their own order. One of the first symptoms they discover of a selfish and mischievous ambition, is a profligate disregard of a dignity which they partake with others. To be attached to the subdivision, to love the little platoon we belong to in society, is the first principle (the germ as it were) of public affections. It is the first link 20 in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country and to mankind. The interests of that portion of social arrangement is a trust in the hands of all those who compose it; and as none but bad men would justify it in abuse, none but traitors would barter it away for their own personal advantage.

There were, in the time of our civil troubles in England, (I do not know whether you have any such in your Assembly in France) several persons, like the then Earl of Holland, who by themselves or their families had brought an odium on the 30 throne, by the prodigal dispensation of its bounties towards them, who afterwards joined in the rebellions arising from the discontents of which they were themselves the cause; men who helped to subvert that throne to which they owed, some of them, their existence, others all that power which they employed to ruin their benefactor. If any bounds are

set to the rapacious demands of that sort of people, or that others are permitted to partake in the objects they would engross, revenge and envy soon fill up the craving void that is left in their avarice. Confounded by the complication of distempered passions, their reason is disturbed ; their views become vast and perplexed ; to others inexplicable ; to themselves uncertain. They find, on all sides, bounds to their unprincipled ambition in any fixed order of things. But in the fog and haze of confusion all is enlarged, and appears  
10 without any limit.

When men of rank sacrifice all ideas of dignity to an ambition without a distinct object, and work with low instruments and for low ends, the whole composition becomes low and base. Does not something like this now appear in France ? Does it not produce something ignoble and inglorious ? a kind of meanness in all the prevalent policy ? a tendency in all that is done to lower along with individuals all the dignity and importance of the state ? Other revolutions have been conducted by persons, who whilst they attempted or effected  
20 changes in the commonwealth, sanctified their ambition by advancing the dignity of the people whose peace they troubled. They had long views. They aimed at the rule, — not at the destruction of their country. They were men of great civil, and great military talents, and if the terror, the ornament of their age. They were not like Jew brokers contending with each other who could best remedy with fraudulent circulation and depreciated paper the wretchedness and ruin brought on their country by their degenerate counsels. The compliment made to one of the great bad men of  
30 the old stamp (Cromwell) by his kinsman, a favourite poet of that time, shows what it was he proposed, and what indeed to a great degree he accomplished in the success of his ambition :

‘Still as *you* rise, the *state*, exalted too,  
Finds no distemper whilst ’tis changed by *you* ;  
Chang’d like the world’s great scene, when without noise  
The rising sun night’s *vulgar* lights destroys.’



These disturbers were not so much like men usurping power, as asserting their natural place in society. Their rising was to illuminate and beautify the world. Their conquest over their competitors was by outshining them. The hand that, like a destroying angel, smote the country, communicated to it the force and energy under which it suffered. I do not say, (God forbid)—I do not say, that the virtues of such men were to be taken as a balance to their crimes; but they were some corrective to their effects. Such was, as I said, our Cromwell. Such were your whole race of Guises, 10 Condés, and Colignis. Such the Richlieus, who in more quiet times acted in the spirit of a civil war. Such, as better men, and in a less dubious cause, were your Henry the 4th and your Sully, though nursed in civil confusions, and not wholly without some of their taint. It is a thing to be wondered at, to see how very soon France, when she had a moment to respire, recovered and emerged from the longest and most dreadful civil war that ever was known in any nation. Why? Because, among all their massacres, they had not slain the *mind* in their country. A conscious dignity, a noble 20 pride, a generous sense of glory and emulation, was not extinguished. On the contrary, it was kindled and inflamed. The organs also of the state, however shattered, existed. All the prizes of honour and virtue, all the rewards, all the distinctions, remained. But your present confusion, like a palsy, has attacked the fountain of life itself. Every person in your country, in a situation to be actuated by a principle of honour, is disgraced and degraded, and can entertain no sensation of life, except in a mortified and humiliated indignation. But this generation will quickly pass away. The 30 next generation of the nobility will resemble the artificers and clowns, and money-jobbers, usurers, and Jews, who will be always their fellows, sometimes their masters. Believe me, Sir, those who attempt to level, never equalize. In all societies, consisting of various descriptions of citizens, some description must be uppermost. The levellers therefore only

change and pervert the natural order of things ; they load the edifice of society, by setting up in the air what the solidity of the structure requires to be on the ground. The associations of tailors and carpenters, of which the republic (of Paris, for instance) is composed, cannot be equal to the situation, into which, by the worst of usurpations, an usurpation on the prerogatives of nature, you attempt to force them.

THE chancellor of France at the opening of the states, 10 said, in a tone of oratorical flourish, that all occupations were honourable. If he meant only, that no honest employment was disgraceful, he would not have gone beyond the truth. But in asserting that any thing is honourable, we imply some distinction in its favour. The occupation of an hair-dresser, or of a working tallow-chandler, cannot be a matter of honour to any person—to say nothing of a number of other more servile employments. Such descriptions of men ought not to suffer oppression from the state ; but the state suffers oppression, if such as they, either individually or collectively, 20 are permitted to rule. In this you think you are combating prejudice, but you are at war with nature.\*

I do not, my dear Sir, conceive you to be of that sophistical captious spirit, or of that uncandid dulness, as to require, for every general observation or sentiment, an explicit detail of

\* Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxxviii. verses 24, 25. 'The wisdom of a learned man cometh by opportunity of leisure : and he that hath little business shall become wise.'—'How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plough, and that glorieth in the goad ; that driveth oxen ; and is occupied in their labours ; and whose talk is of bullocks ?'

Ver. 27. 'So every carpenter and work-master that laboreth night and day.' &c.

Ver. 33. 'They shall not be sought for in public counsel, nor sit high in the congregation : they shall not sit on the judges seat, nor understand the sentence of judgment : they cannot declare justice and judgment, and they shall not be found where parables are spoken.'

Ver. 34. 'But they will maintain the state of the world.'

I do not determine whether this book be canonical, as the Gallican church (till lately) has considered it, or apocryphal, as here it is taken. I am sure it contains a great deal of sense and truth.

the correctives and exceptions, which reason will presume to be included in all the general propositions which come from reasonable men. You do not imagine, that I wish to confine power, authority, and distinction to blood, and names, and titles. No, Sir. There is no qualification for government, but virtue and wisdom, actual or presumptive. Wherever they are actually found, they have, in whatever state, condition, profession or trade, the passport of Heaven to human place and honour. Woe to the country which would madly and impiously reject the service of the talents and virtues, 10 civil, military, or religious, that are given to grace and to serve it; and would condemn to obscurity every thing formed to diffuse lustre and glory around a state. Woe to that country too, that passing into the opposite extreme, considers a low education, a mean contracted view of things, a sordid mercenary occupation, as a preferable title to command. Every thing ought to be open; but not indifferently to every man. No rotation; no appointment by lot; no mode of election operating in the spirit of sortition or rotation, can be generally good in a government conversant in extensive 20 objects. Because they have no tendency, direct or indirect, to select the man with a view to the duty, or to accommodate the one to the other. I do not hesitate to say, that the road to eminence and power, from obscure condition, ought not to be made too easy, nor a thing too much of course. If rare merit be the rarest of all rare things, it ought to pass through some sort of probation. The temple of honour ought to be seated on an eminence. If it be open through virtue, let it be remembered too, that virtue is never tried but by some difficulty, and some struggle. 30

Nothing is a due and adequate representation of a state, that does not represent its ability, as well as its property. But as ability is a vigorous and active principle, and as property is sluggish, inert, and timid, it never can be safe from the invasions of ability, unless it be, out of all proportion, predominant in the representation. It must be repre-

sented too in great masses of accumulation, or it is not rightly protected. The characteristic essence of property, formed out of the combined principles of its acquisition and conservation, is to be *unequal*. The great masses therefore which excite envy, and tempt rapacity, must be put out of the possibility of danger. Then they form a natural rampart about the lesser properties in all their gradations. The same quantity of property, which is by the natural course of things divided among many, has not the same operation.

- 10 Its defensive power is weakened as it is diffused. In this diffusion each man's portion is less than what, in the eagerness of his desires, he may flatter himself to obtain by dissipating the accumulations of others. The plunder of the few would indeed give but a share inconceivably small in the distribution to the many. But the many are not capable of making this calculation ; and those who lead them to rapine, never intend this distribution.

The power of perpetuating our property in our families is one of the most valuable and interesting circumstances  
20 belonging to it, and that which tends the most to the perpetuation of society itself. It makes our weakness subservient to our virtue ; it grafts benevolence even upon avarice. The possessors of family wealth, and of the distinction which attends hereditary possession (as most concerned in it) are the natural securities for this transmission. With us, the house of peers is formed upon this principle. It is wholly composed of hereditary property and hereditary distinction ; and made therefore the third of the legislature ; and in the last event, the sole judge of all property in all  
30 its subdivisions. The house of commons too, though not necessarily, yet in fact, is always so composed in the far greater part. Let those large proprietors be what they will, and they have their chance of being amongst the best, they are, at the very worst, the ballast in the vessel of the commonwealth. For though hereditary wealth, and the rank which goes with it, are too much idolized by creeping sycophants,

and the blind abject admirers of power, they are too rashly slighted in shallow speculations of the petulant, assuming, short-sighted coxcombs of philosophy. Some decent regulated pre-eminence, some preference (not exclusive appropriation) given to birth, is neither unnatural, nor unjust, nor impolitic.

It is said, that twenty-four millions ought to prevail over two hundred thousand. True; if the constitution of a Kingdom be a problem of arithmetic. This sort of discourse does well enough with the lamp-post for its second: to men who 10 *may* reason calmly, it is ridiculous. The will of the many, and their interest, must very often differ; and great will be the difference when they make an evil choice. A government of five hundred country attorneys and obscure curates is not good for twenty-four millions of men, though it were chosen by eight and forty millions; nor is it the better for being guided by a dozen of persons of quality, who have betrayed their trust in order to obtain that power. At present, you seem in everything to have strayed out of the high road of nature. The property of France does not govern it. Of 20 course property is destroyed, and rational liberty has no existence. All you have got for the present is a paper circulation, and a stock-jobbing constitution: and as to the future, do you seriously think that the territory of France, under the republican system of eighty-three independent municipalities (to say nothing of the parts that compose them) can ever be governed as one body, or can ever be set in motion by the impulse of one mind? When the National Assembly has completed its work, it will have accomplished its ruin. These commonwealths will not long bear a state of 30 subjection to the republic of Paris. They will not bear that this one body should monopolize the captivity of the king, and the dominion over the assembly calling itself National. Each will keep its own portion of the spoil of the church to itself; and it will not suffer either that spoil, or the more just fruits of their industry, or the natural produce of their

soil, to be sent to swell the insolence, or pamper the luxury of the mechanics of Paris. In this they will see none of the equality, under the pretence of which they have been tempted to throw off their allegiance to their sovereign, as well as the ancient constitution of their country. There can be no capital city in such a constitution as they have lately made. They have forgot, that when they framed democratic governments, they had virtually dismembered their country. The person whom they persevere in calling king, has not power left to  
 10 him by the hundredth part sufficient to hold together this collection of republics. The republic of Paris will endeavour indeed to complete the debauchery of the army, and illegally to perpetuate the assembly, without resort to its constituents, as the means of continuing its despotism. It will make efforts, by becoming the heart of a boundless paper circulation, to draw everything to itself; but in vain. All this policy in the end will appear as feeble as it is now violent.

If this be your actual situation, compared to the situation to which you were called, as it were by the voice of God and  
 20 man, I cannot find it in my heart to congratulate you on the choice you have made, or the success which has attended your endeavours. I can as little recommend to any other nation a conduct grounded on such principles, and productive of such effects. That I must leave to those who can see further into your affairs than I am able to do, and who best know how far your actions are favourable to their designs. The gentlemen of the Revolution Society, who were so early in their congratulations, appear to be strongly of opinion that there is some scheme of politics relative to this country,  
 30 in which your proceedings may, in some way, be useful. For your Dr. Price, who seems to have speculated himself into no small degree of fervour upon this subject, addresses his auditory in the following very remarkable words: 'I cannot conclude without recalling *particularly* to your recollection a consideration which I have *more than once alluded to*, and

which probably your thoughts have *been all along anticipating*; a consideration with which my *mind is impressed more than I can express*. I mean the consideration of the *favourableness of the present times to all exertions in the cause of liberty*.'

It is plain that the mind of this political Preacher was at the time big with some extraordinary design; and it is very probable, that the thoughts of his audience, who understood him better than I do, did all along run before him in his reflection, and in the whole train of consequences to which it 10 led.

Before I read that sermon, I really thought I had lived in a free country; and it was an error I cherished, because it gave me a greater liking to the country I lived in. I was indeed aware, that a jealous, ever-waking vigilance, to guard the treasure of our liberty, not only from invasion, but from decay and corruption, was our best wisdom and our first duty. However, I considered that treasure rather as a possession to be secured than as a prize to be contended for. I did not discern how the present time came to be so very 20 favourable to all *exertions* in the cause of freedom. The present time differs from any other only by the circumstance of what is doing in France. If the example of that nation is to have an influence on this, I can easily conceive why some of their proceedings which have an unpleasant aspect, and are not quite reconcileable to humanity, generosity, good faith, and justice, are palliated with so much milky good-nature towards the actors, and borne with so much heroic fortitude towards the sufferers. It is certainly not prudent to discredit the authority of an example we mean to follow. 30 But allowing this, we are led to a very natural question; —What is that cause of liberty, and what are those exertions in its favour, to which the example of France is so singularly auspicious? Is our monarchy to be annihilated, with all the laws, all the tribunals, and all the ancient corporations of the kingdom? Is every land-mark of the

country to be done away in favour of a geometrical and arithmetical constitution? Is the house of lords to be voted useless? Is episcopacy to be abolished? Are the church lands to be sold to Jews and jobbers; or given to bribe new-invented municipal republics into a participation in sacrilege? Are all the taxes to be voted grievances, and the revenue reduced to a patriotic contribution, or patriotic presents? Are silver shoe-buckles to be substituted in the place of the land tax and the malt tax, for the support of the naval strength of this kingdom? Are all orders, ranks, and distinctions, to be confounded, that out of universal anarchy, joined to national bankruptcy, three or four thousand democracies should be formed into eighty-three, and that they may all, by some sort of unknown attractive power, be organized into one? For this great end, is the army to be seduced from its discipline and its fidelity, first, by every kind of debauchery, and then by the terrible precedent of a donative in the increase of pay? Are the curates to be seduced from their bishops, by holding out to them the delusive hope of a dole out of the spoils of their own order? Are the citizens of London to be drawn from their allegiance, by feeding them at the expense of their fellow subjects? Is a compulsory paper currency to be substituted in the place of the legal coin of this kingdom? Is what remains of the plundered stock of public revenue to be employed in the wild project of maintaining two armies to watch over and to fight with each other?—If these are the ends and means of the Revolution Society, I admit they are well assorted; and France may furnish them for both with precedents in point.

I see that your example is held out to shame us. I know that we are supposed a dull sluggish race, rendered passive by finding our situation tolerable; and prevented by a mediocrity of freedom from ever attaining to its full perfection. Your leaders in France began by affecting to admire, almost to adore, the British constitution; but as they



advanced they came to look upon it with a sovereign contempt. The friends of your National Assembly amongst us have full as mean an opinion of what was formerly thought the glory of their country. The Revolution Society has discovered that the English nation is not free. They are convinced that the inequality in our representation is a 'defect in our constitution so *gross and palpable*, as to make it excellent chiefly in *form and theory*.\* That a representation in the legislature of a kingdom is not only the basis of all constitutional liberty in it, but of '*all legitimate government*; that without it a *government* is nothing but an *usurpation*;'—that 'when the representation is *partial*, the kingdom possesses liberty only *partially*; and if extremely partial it gives only a *semblance*; and if not only extremely partial, but corruptly chosen, it becomes a *nuisance*.' Dr. Price considers this inadequacy of representation as our *fundamental grievance*; and though, as to the corruption of this semblance of representation, he hopes it is not yet arrived to its full perfection of depravity, he fears that 'nothing will be done towards gaining for us this *essential* 20 *blessing*, until some *great abuse of power* again provokes our resentment, or some *great calamity* again alarms our fears, or perhaps till the acquisition of a *pure and equal representation by other countries*, whilst we are *mocked with the shadow*, kindles our shame.' To this he subjoins a note in these words. 'A representation, chosen chiefly by the Treasury, and a *few* thousands of the *dregs* of the people, who are generally paid for their votes.'

You will smile here at the consistency of those democrats, who, when they are not on their guard, treat the 30 humbler part of the community with the greatest contempt, whilst, at the same time, they pretend to make them the depositories of all power. It would require a long discourse to point out to you the many fallacies that lurk in the generality and equivocal nature of the terms 'inadequate

\* Discourse on the Love of our Country, 3rd edit. p. 39.

- representation.' I shall only say here, in justice to that old-fashioned constitution, under which we have long prospered, that our representation has been found perfectly adequate to all the purposes for which a representation of the people can be desired or devised. I defy the enemies of our constitution to show the contrary. To detail the particulars in which it is found so well to promote its ends, would demand a treatise on our practical constitution. I state here the doctrine of the Revolutionists, only that you and others may
- 10 see, what an opinion these gentlemen entertain of the constitution of their country, and why they seem to think that some great abuse of power, or some great calamity, as giving a chance for the blessing of a constitution according to their ideas, would be much palliated to their feelings; you see why they are so much enamoured of your fair and equal representation, which being once obtained, the same effects might follow. You see they consider our house of commons as only 'a semblance,' 'a form,' 'a theory,' 'a shadow,' 'a mockery,' perhaps 'a nuisance.'
- 20 These gentlemen value themselves on being systematic; and not without reason. They must therefore look on this gross and palpable defect of representation, this fundamental grievance (so they call it), as a thing not only vicious in itself, but as rendering our whole government absolutely *illegitimate*, and not at all better than a downright *usurpation*. Another revolution, to get rid of this illegitimate and usurped government, would of course be perfectly justifiable, if not absolutely necessary. Indeed their principle, if you observe it with any attention, goes much further than to an
- 30 alteration in the election of the house of commons; for, if popular representation, or choice, is necessary to the *legitimacy* of all government, the house of lords is, at one stroke, bastardized and corrupted in blood. That house is no representative of the people at all, even in 'semblance' or in 'form.' The case of the crown is altogether as bad. In vain the crown may endeavour to screen itself against

these gentlemen by the authority of the establishment made on the Revolution. The Revolution which is resorted to for a title, on their system, wants a title itself. The Revolution is built, according to their theory, upon a basis not more solid than our present formalities, as it was made by an house of lords not representing any one but themselves; and by an house of commons exactly such as the present, that is, as they term it, by a mere 'shadow and mockery' of representation.

Something they must destroy, or they seem to themselves 10 to exist for no purpose. One set is for destroying the civil power through the ecclesiastical; another for demolishing the ecclesiastic through the civil. They are aware that the worst consequences might happen to the public in accomplishing this double ruin of church and state; but they are so heated with their theories, that they give more than hints, that this ruin, with all the mischiefs that must lead to it and attend it, and which to themselves appear quite certain, would not be unacceptable to them, or very remote from their wishes. A man amongst them of great authority, and certainly of 20 great talents, speaking of a supposed alliance between church and state, says, '*perhaps we must wait for the fall of the civil powers* before this most unnatural alliance be broken. Calamitous no doubt will that time be. But what convulsion in the political world ought to be a subject of lamentation, if it be attended with so desirable an effect?' You see with what a steady eye these gentlemen are prepared to view the greatest calamities which can befall their country!

It is no wonder therefore, that with these ideas of every thing in their constitution and government at home, either in 30 church or state, as illegitimate and usurped, or, at best as a vain mockery, they look abroad with an eager and passionate enthusiasm. Whilst they are possessed by these notions, it is vain to talk to them of the practice of their ancestors, the fundamental laws of their country, the fixed form of a constitution, whose merits are confirmed by the solid test of long

experience, and an increasing public strength and national prosperity. They despise experience as the wisdom of unlettered men ; and as for the rest, they have wrought under-ground a mine that will blow up at one grand explosion all examples of antiquity, all precedents, charters, and acts of parliament. They have 'the rights of men.' Against these there can be no prescription ; against these no agreement is binding : these admit no temperament, and no compromise : any thing withheld from their full demand is so much of fraud and injustice. Against these their rights of men let no government look for security in the length of its continuance, or in the justice and lenity of its administration. The objections of these speculatists, if its forms do not quadrate with their theories, are as valid against such an old and beneficent government as against the most violent tyranny, or the greenest usurpation. They are always at issue with governments, not on a question of abuse, but a question of competency, and a question of title. I have nothing to say to the clumsy subtilty of their political metaphysics. Let them be their amusement in the schools.—'*Illu se jactet in aula Æolus, et clauso ventorum carcere regnet*'—

[*There let him lord it to his mind,*

*The jailor-monarch of the wind,*

*But keep its portal barred.]*

But let them not break prison to burst like a Levanter, to sweep the earth with their hurricane, and to break up the fountains of the great deep to overwhelm us.

Far am I from denying in theory, full as far is my heart from withholding in practice, (if I were of power to give or withhold,) the *real* rights of men. In denying their false claims of right, I do not mean to injure those which are real, and are such as their pretended rights would totally destroy. If civil society be made for the advantage of man, all the advantages for which it is made become his right. It is an institution of beneficence ; and law itself is only beneficence acting by a rule. Men have a right to live by that rule ;

they have a right to justice, as between their fellows, whether their fellows are in politic function or in ordinary occupation. They have a right to the fruits of their industry; and to the means of making their industry fruitful. They have a right to the acquisitions of their parents; to the nourishment and improvement of their offspring; to instruction in life, and to consolation in death. Whatever each man can separately do, without trespassing upon others, he has a right to do for himself; and he has a right to a fair portion of all which society, with all its combinations of skill and 10 force, can do in his favour. In this partnership all men have equal rights; but not to equal things. He that has but five shillings in the partnership, has as good a right to it, as he that has five hundred pounds has to his larger proportion. But he has not a right to an equal dividend in the product of the joint stock; and as to the share of power, authority, and direction which each individual ought to have in the management of the state, that I must deny to be amongst the direct original rights of man in civil society; for I have in my contemplation the civil social man, and no other. It 20 is a thing to be settled by convention.

If civil society be the offspring of convention, that convention must be its law. That convention must limit and modify all the descriptions of constitution which are formed under it. Every sort of legislative, judicial, or executory power are its creatures. They can have no being in any other state of things; and how can any man claim, under the conventions of civil society, rights which do not so much as suppose its existence? Rights which are absolutely repugnant to it? One of the first motives to civil society, and which becomes 30 one of its fundamental rules, is, *that no man should be judge in his own cause.* By this each person has at once divested himself of the first fundamental right of uncovenanted man, that is, to judge for himself, and to assert his own cause. He abdicates all right to be his own governor. He inclusively, in a great measure, abandons the right of self-defence, the

first law of nature. Men cannot enjoy the rights of an uncivil and of a civil state together. That he may obtain justice, he gives up his right of determining what it is in points the most essential to him. That he may secure some liberty, he makes a surrender in trust of the whole of it.

Government is not made in virtue of natural rights, which may and do exist in total independence of it; and exist in much greater clearness, and in a much greater degree of abstract perfection: but their abstract perfection is their  
 10 practical defect. By having a right to every thing they want every thing. Government is a contrivance of human wisdom to provide for human *wants*. Men have a right that these wants should be provided for by this wisdom. Among these wants is to be reckoned the want, out of civil society, of a sufficient restraint upon their passions. Society requires not only that the passions of individuals should be subjected, but that even in the mass and body as well as in the individuals the inclinations of men should frequently be thwarted, their will controlled, and their passions brought into subjection.  
 20 This can only be done *by a power out of themselves*; and not, in the exercise of its function, subject to that will and to those passions which it is its office to bridle and subdue. In this sense the restraints on men, as well as their liberties, are to be reckoned among their rights. But as the liberties and the restrictions vary with times and circumstances, and admit of infinite modifications, they cannot be settled upon any abstract rule; and nothing is so foolish as to discuss them upon that principle.

The moment you abate anything from the full rights of  
 30 men, each to govern himself, and suffer any artificial positive limitation upon those rights, from that moment the whole organization of government becomes a consideration of convenience. This it is which makes the constitution of a state, and the due distribution of its powers, a matter of the most delicate and complicated skill. It requires a deep knowledge of human nature and human necessities, and of the things

which facilitate or obstruct the various ends which are to be pursued by the mechanism of civil institutions. The state is to have recruits to its strength, and remedies to its distempers. What is the use of discussing a man's abstract right to food or to medicine? The question is upon the method of procuring and administering them. In that deliberation I shall always advise to call in the aid of the farmer and the physician, rather than the professor of metaphysics.

The science of constructing a commonwealth, or renovating 10 it, or reforming it, is, like every other experimental science, not to be taught *à priori*. Nor is it a short experience that can instruct us in that practical science; because the real effects of moral causes are not always immediate; but that which in the first instance is prejudicial may be excellent in its remoter operation; and its excellence may arise even from the ill effects it produces in the beginning. The reverse also happens; and very plausible schemes, with very pleasing commencements, have often shameful and lamentable conclusions. In states there are often some obscure and almost 20 latent causes, things which appear at first view of little moment, on which a very great part of its prosperity or adversity may most essentially depend. The science of government being therefore so practical in itself, and intended for such practical purposes, a matter which requires experience, and even more experience than any person can gain in his whole life, however sagacious and observing he may be, it is with infinite caution that any man ought to venture upon pulling down an edifice which has answered in any tolerable degree for ages the common purposes of society, or on build- 30 ing it up again, without having models and patterns of approved utility before his eyes.

These metaphysic rights entering into common life, like rays of light which pierce into a dense medium, are, by the laws of nature, refracted from their straight line. Indeed in the gross and complicated mass of human passions and con-

cerns, the primitive rights of men undergo such a variety of refractions and reflections, that it becomes absurd to talk of them as if they continued in the simplicity of their original direction. The nature of man is intricate; the objects of society are of the greatest possible complexity; and therefore no simple disposition or direction of power can be suitable either to man's nature, or to the quality of his affairs. When I hear the simplicity of contrivance aimed at and boasted of in any new political constitutions, I am at no loss to decide  
 10 that the artificers are grossly ignorant of their trade, or totally negligent of their duty. The simple governments are fundamentally defective, to say no worse of them. If you were to contemplate society in but one point of view, all these simple modes of polity are infinitely captivating. In effect each would answer its single end much more perfectly than the more complex is able to attain all its complex purposes. But it is better that the whole should be imperfectly and anomalously answered, than that, while some parts are provided for with great exactness, others might be totally neglected, or  
 20 perhaps materially injured, by the overcare of a favourite member.

The pretended rights of these theorists are all extremes; and in proportion as they are metaphysically true, they are morally and politically false. The rights of men are in a sort of *middle*, incapable of definition, but not impossible to be discerned. The rights of men in governments are their advantages; and these are often in balances between differences of good; in compromises sometimes between good and evil, and sometimes, between evil and evil. Political reason  
 30 is a computing principle; adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing, morally and not metaphysically or mathematically, true moral denominations.

By these theorists the right of the people is almost always sophistically confounded with their power. The body of the community, whenever it can come to act, can meet with no effectual resistance; but till power and right are the same,



the whole body of them has no right inconsistent with virtue, and the first of all virtues, prudence. Men have no right to what is not reasonable, and to what is not for their benefit ; for though a pleasant writer said, *Liceat perire poetis*, [*Leave poets free to perish as they wish*,] when one of them, in cold blood, is said to have leaped into the flames of a volcanic revolution, *Ardentem frigidus Ætnam insiluit*, [*Leapt down hot Ætna's crater, calm and cool*,] I consider such a frolic rather as an unjustifiable poetic licence, than as one of the franchises of Parnassus ; and whether he were poet, or divine, 10 or politician, that chose to exercise this kind of right, I think that more wise, because more charitable thoughts would urge me rather to save the man, than to preserve his brazen slippers as the monuments of his folly.

THE kind of anniversary sermons, to which a great part of what I write refers, if men are not shamed out of their present course, in commemorating the fact, will cheat many out of the principles, and deprive them of the benefits of the Revolution they commemorate. I confess to you, Sir, I never liked this continual talk of resistance and revolution, or the practice of 20 making the extreme medicine of the constitution its daily bread. It renders the habit of society dangerously valetudinary : it is taking periodical doses of mercury sublimated, and swallowing down repeated provocatives of cantharides to our love of liberty.

This distemper of remedy, grown habitual, relaxes and wears out, by a vulgar and prostituted use, the spring of that spirit which is to be exerted on great occasions. It was in the most patient period of Roman servitude that themes of tyrannicide made the ordinary exercise of boys at school— 30 *cum perimit sævos classis numerosa tyrannos*—

[Where boys, in long succession, rave and storm  
At tyranny, through many a crowded form.]

In the ordinary state of things, it produces in a country like ours the worst effects, even on the cause of that liberty which

- it abuses with the dissoluteness of an extravagant speculation. Almost all the high-bred republicans of my time have, after a short space, become the most decided, thorough-paced courtiers ; they soon left the business of a tedious, moderate, but practical resistance, to those of us whom, in the pride and intoxication of their theories, they have slighted, as not much better than Tories. Hypocrisy, of course, delights in the most sublime speculations ; for, never intending to go beyond speculation, it costs nothing to have it magnificent.
- 10 But even in cases where rather levity than fraud was to be suspected in these ranting speculations, the issue has been much the same. These professors, finding their extreme principles not applicable to cases which call only for a qualified, or, as I may say, civil and legal resistance, in such cases employ no resistance at all. It is with them a war or a revolution, or it is nothing. Finding their schemes of politics not adapted to the state of the world in which they live, they often come to think lightly of all public principle ; and are ready, on their part, to abandon for a very trivial interest
- 20 what they find of very trivial value. Some indeed are of more steady and persevering natures ; but these are eager politicians out of parliament, who have little to tempt them to abandon their favourite projects. They have some change in the church or state, or both, constantly in their view. When that is the case, they are always bad citizens, and perfectly unsure connexions. For, considering their speculative designs as of infinite value, and the actual arrangement of the state as of no estimation, they are at best indifferent about it. They see no merit in the good, and no fault in the
- 30 vicious management of public affairs ; they rather rejoice in the latter, as more propitious to revolution. They see no merit or demerit in any man, or any action, or any political principle, any further than as they may forward or retard their design of change : they therefore take up, one day, the most violent and stretched prerogative, and another time the wildest democratic ideas of freedom, and pass from the one

to the other without any sort of regard to cause, to person, or to party.

In France you are now in the crisis of a revolution, and in the transit from one form of government to another—you cannot see that character of men exactly in the same situation in which we see it in this country. With us it is militant; with you it is triumphant; and you know how it can act when its power is commensurate to its will. I would not be supposed to confine those observations to any description of men, or to comprehend all men of any description within 10 them—No! far from it. I am as incapable of that injustice, as I am of keeping terms with those who profess principles of extremes; and who under the name of religion teach little else than wild and dangerous politics. The worst of these politics of revolution is this; they temper and harden the breast, in order to prepare it for the desperate strokes which are sometimes used in extreme occasions. But as these occasions may never arrive, the mind receives a gratuitous taint; and the moral sentiments suffer not a little, when no political purpose is served by the depravation. This sort of people are 20 so taken up with their theories about the rights of man, that they have totally forgot his nature. Without opening one new avenue to the understanding, they have succeeded in stopping up those that lead to the heart. They have perverted in themselves, and in those that attend to them, all the well-placed sympathies of the human breast.

This famous sermon of the Old Jewry breathes nothing but this spirit through all the political part. Plots, massacres, assassinations, seem to some people a trivial price for obtaining a revolution. A cheap, bloodless reformation, a guiltless 30 liberty, appear flat and vapid to their taste. There must be a great change of scene; there must be a magnificent stage effect; there must be a grand spectacle to rouse the imagination, grown torpid with the lazy enjoyment of sixty years security, and the still unanimating repose of public prosperity. The Preacher found them all in the French revolution. This

inspires a juvenile warmth through his whole frame. His enthusiasm kindles as he advances ; and when he arrives at his peroration, it is in a full blaze. Then viewing, from the Pisgah of his pulpit, the free, moral, happy, flourishing, and glorious state of France, as in a bird's-eye landscape of a promised land, he breaks out into the following rapture :

- ‘What an eventful period is this ! I am *thankful* that I have lived to it ; I could almost say, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*
- 10 —I have lived to see a *diffusion* of knowledge, which has undermined superstition and error.—I have lived to see the *rights of men* better understood than ever ; and nations panting for liberty which seemed to have lost the idea of it.—I have lived to see *Thirty Millions of People*, indignant and resolute, spurning at slavery, and demanding liberty with an irresistible voice. *Their King led in triumph, and an arbitrary monarch surrendering himself to his subjects.\**

Before I proceed further, I have to remark, that Dr. Price seems rather to over-value the great acquisitions of light which he has obtained and diffused in this age. The last century appears to me to have been quite as much enlightened. It had, though in a different place, a triumph as memorable as that of Dr. Price ; and some of the great preachers of that period partook of it as eagerly as he has done in the triumph of France. On the trial of the Rev. Hugh Peters for high treason, it was deposed, that when King Charles was brought to London for his trial, the Apostle of Liberty in that day conducted the triumph. ‘I saw,’ says the witness, ‘his majesty in the coach with six horses, and Peters riding before the king triumphing.’ Dr.

\* Another of these reverend gentlemen, who was witness to some of the spectacles which Paris has lately exhibited—expresses himself thus ; ‘*A king dragged in submissive triumph by his conquering subjects* is one of those appearances of grandeur which seldom rise in the prospect of human affairs, and which, during the remainder of my life, I shall think of with wonder and gratification.’ These gentlemen agree marvellously in their feelings.

Price, when he talks as if he had made a discovery, only follows a precedent; for, after the commencement of the king's trial, this precursor, the same Dr. Peters, concluding a long prayer at the royal chapel at Whitehall, (he had very triumphantly chosen his place) said, 'I have prayed and preached these twenty years; and now I may say with old Simeon, *Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.*'\* Peters had not the fruits of his prayer; for he neither departed so soon as he wished, nor in peace. He became (what I heartily hope none of his 10 followers may be in this country) himself a sacrifice to the triumph which he led as Pontiff. They dealt at the Restoration, perhaps, too hardly with this poor good man. But we owe it to his memory and his sufferings, that he had as much illumination, and as much zeal, and had as effectually undermined all the *superstition and error* which might impede the great business he was engaged in, as any who follow and repeat after him, in this age, which would assume to itself an exclusive title to the knowledge of the rights of men, and all the glorious consequences of that knowledge. 20

After this sally of the preacher of the Old Jewry, which differs only in place and time, but agrees perfectly with the spirit and letter of the rapture of 1648, the Revolution Society, the fabricators of governments, the heroic band of cashierers of monarchs, electors of sovereigns, and leaders of kings in triumph, strutting with a proud consciousness of the diffusion of knowledge, of which every member had obtained so large a share in the donative, were in haste to make a generous diffusion of the knowledge they had thus gratuitously received. To make this bountiful communication, they 30 adjourned from the church in the Old Jewry, to the London Tavern; where the famous Dr. Price, in whom the fumes of his oracular tripod were not entirely evaporated, moved and carried the resolution, or address of congratulation, transmitted by Lord Stanhope to the National Assembly of France.

\* State Trials, vol. ii. p. 360, p. 363.

I find a preacher of the gospel profaning the beautiful and prophetic ejaculation, commonly called '*nunc dimittis*,' made on the first presentation of our Saviour in the Temple, and applying it, with an inhuman and unnatural rapture, to the most horrid, atrocious, and afflicting spectacle, that perhaps ever was exhibited to the pity and indignation of mankind. This '*leading in triumph*,' a thing in its best form unmanly and irreligious, which fills our Preacher with such unhallowed transports, must shock, I believe, the moral taste  
 10 of every well-born mind. Several English were the stupified and indignant spectators of that triumph. It was, unless we have been strangely deceived, a spectacle more resembling a procession of American savages, entering into Onondaga, after some of their murders called victories, and leading into hovels hung round with scalps, their captives, overpowered with the scoffs and buffets of women as ferocious as themselves, much more than it resembled the triumphal pomp of a civilized martial nation—if a civilized nation, or any men who had a sense of generosity, were capable of a personal  
 20 triumph over the fallen and afflicted.

THIS, my dear Sir, was not the triumph of France. I must believe that, as a nation, it overwhelmed you with shame and horror. I must believe that the National Assembly find themselves in a state of the greatest humiliation, in not being able to punish the authors of this triumph, or the actors in it; and that they are in a situation in which any enquiry they may make upon the subject, must be destitute even of the appearance of liberty or impartiality. The apology of that Assembly is found in their situation;  
 30 but when we approve what they *must* bear, it is in us the degenerate choice of a vitiated mind.

With a compelled appearance of deliberation, they vote under the dominion of a stern necessity. They sit in the heart, as it were, of a foreign republic: they have their residence in a city whose constitution has emanated neither

from the charter of their king, nor from their legislative power. There they are surrounded by an army not raised either by the authority of their crown, or by their command; and which, if they should order to dissolve itself, would instantly dissolve them. There they sit, after a gang of assassins had driven away some hundreds of the members; whilst those who held the same moderate principles with more patience or better hope, continued every day exposed to outrageous insults and murderous threats. There a majority, sometimes real, sometimes pretended, captive 10 itself, compels a captive king to issue as royal edicts, at third hand, the polluted nonsense of their most licentious and giddy coffee-houses. It is notorious, that all their measures are decided before they are debated. It is beyond doubt, that under the terror of the bayonet, and the lamp-post, and the torch to their houses, they are obliged to adopt all the crude and desperate measures suggested by clubs composed of a monstrous medley of all conditions, tongues, and nations. Among these are found persons, in comparison of whom Catiline would be thought scrupulous, and Cethegus 20 a man of sobriety and moderation. Nor is it in these clubs alone that the public measures are deformed into monsters. They undergo a previous distortion in academies, intended as so many seminaries for these clubs, which are set up in all the places of public resort. In these meetings of all sorts, every counsel, in proportion as it is daring, and violent, and perfidious, is taken for the mark of superior genius. Humanity and compassion are ridiculed as the fruits of superstition and ignorance. Tenderness to individuals is considered as treason to the public. Liberty is always to be 30 estimated perfect as property is rendered insecure. Amidst assassination, massacre, and confiscation, perpetrated or meditated, they are forming plans for the good order of future society. Embracing in their arms the carcases of base criminals, and promoting their relations on the title of their offences, they drive hundreds of virtuous persons to

the same end, by forcing them to subsist by beggary or by crime.

The Assembly, their organ, acts before them the farce of deliberation with as little decency as liberty. They act like the comedians of a fair before a riotous audience; they act amidst the tumultuous cries of a mixed mob of ferocious men, and of women lost to shame, who, according to their insolent fancies, direct, control, applaud, explode them; and sometimes mix and take their seats amongst them; domineering over them with a strange mixture of servile petulance and proud presumptuous authority. As they have inverted order in all things, the gallery is in the place of the house. This Assembly, which overthrows kings and kingdoms, has not even the physiognomy and aspect of a grave legislative body—*nec color imperii, nec frons erat ulla senatus* [it had neither the complexion of empire nor the appearance of a senate]. They have a power given to them, like that of the evil principle, to subvert and destroy; but none to construct, except such machines as may be fitted for  
 10 further subversion and further destruction.

Who is it that admires, and from the heart is attached to national representative assemblies, but must turn with horror and disgust from such a profane burlesque, and abominable perversion of that sacred institute? Lovers of monarchy, lovers of republics, must alike abhor it. The members of your Assembly must themselves groan under the tyranny of which they have all the shame, none of the direction, and little of the profit. I am sure many of the members who compose even the majority of that body must  
 30 feel as I do, notwithstanding the applauses of the Revolution Society.—Miserable king! miserable Assembly! How must that assembly be silently scandalized with those of their members, who could call a day which seemed to blot the sun out of Heaven, '*Un beau jour!*'\* [a beautiful day!] How must they be inwardly indignant at hearing others, who thought

\* 6th of October, 1789.



fit to declare to them 'that the vessel of the state would fly forward in her course towards regeneration with more speed than ever,' from the stiff gale of treason and murder, which preceded our Preacher's triumph! What must they have felt, whilst with outward patience and inward indignation they heard of the slaughter of innocent gentlemen in their houses, that 'the blood spilled was not the most pure?' What must they have felt, when they were besieged by complaints of disorders which shook their country to its foundations, at being compelled coolly to tell the com- 10 plainants, that they were under the protection of the law, and that they would address the king (the captive king) to cause the laws to be enforced for their protection; when the enslaved ministers of that captive king had formally notified to them, that there were neither law, nor authority, nor power left to protect? What must they have felt at being obliged, as a felicitation on the present new year, to request their captive king to forget the stormy period of the last, on account of the great good which *he* was likely to produce to his people; to the complete attainment of which 20 good they adjourned the practical demonstrations of their loyalty, assuring him of their obedience, when he should no longer possess any authority to command?

This address was made with much good-nature and affection, to be sure. But among the revolutions in France must be reckoned a considerable revolution in their ideas of politeness. In England we are said to learn manners at second-hand from your side of the water, and that we dress our behaviour in the frippery of France. If so, we are still in the old cut; and have not so far conformed to the new 30 Parisian mode of good-breeding, as to think it quite in the most refined strain of delicate compliment, whether in condolence or congratulation, to say to the most humiliated creature that crawls upon the earth, that great public benefits are derived from the murder of his servants, the attempted assassination of himself and of his wife, and the

mortification, disgrace, and degradation, that he has personally suffered. It is a topic of consolation which our ordinary of Newgate would be too humane to use to a criminal at the foot of the gallows. I should have thought that the hangman of Paris, now that he is liberalized by the vote of the National Assembly, and is allowed his rank and arms in the Herald's College of the rights of men, would be too generous, too gallant a man, too full of the sense of his new dignity, to employ that cutting consolation  
10 to any of the persons whom the *leve nation* might bring under the administration of his *executive powers*.

A man is fallen indeed, when he is thus flattered. The anodyne draught of oblivion, thus drugged, is well calculated to preserve a galling wakefulness, and to feed the living ulcer of a corroding memory. Thus to administer the opiate potion of amnesty, powdered with all the ingredients of scorn and contempt, is to hold to his lips, instead of 'the balm of hurt minds,' the cup of human misery full to the brim, and to force him to drink it to the dregs.

20 Yielding to reasons at least as forcible as those which were so delicately urged in the compliment on the new year, the king of France will probably endeavour to forget these events, and that compliment. But history, who keeps a durable record of all our acts, and exercises her awful censure over the proceedings of all sorts of sovereigns, will not forget either those events or the æra of this liberal refinement in the intercourse of mankind. History will record, that on the morning of the 6th of October 1789, the king and queen of France, after a day of confusion, alarm, dismay, and slaughter,  
30 lay down, under the pledged security of public faith, to indulge nature in a few hours of respite, and troubled melancholy repose. From this sleep the queen was first startled by the voice of the sentinel at her door, who cried out to her to save herself by flight—that this was the last proof of fidelity he could give—that they were upon him, and he was dead. Instantly he was cut down. A band of cruel ruffians

and assassins, reeking with his blood, rushed into the chamber of the queen, and pierced with an hundred strokes of bayonets and poniards the bed, from whence this persecuted woman had but just had time to fly almost naked, and through ways unknown to the murderers had escaped to seek refuge at the feet of a king and husband, not secure of his own life for a moment.

This king, to say no more of him, and this queen, and their infant children (who once would have been the pride and hope of a great and generous people) were then forced to 10 abandon the sanctuary of the most splendid palace in the world, which they left swimming in blood, polluted by massacre, and strewed with scattered limbs and mutilated carcases. Thence they were conducted into the capital of their kingdom. Two had been selected from the unprovoked, unresisted, promiscuous slaughter, which was made of the gentlemen of birth and family who composed the king's body guard. These two gentlemen, with all the parade of an execution of justice, were cruelly and publicly dragged to the block, and beheaded in the great court of the palace. 20 Their heads were stuck upon spears, and led the procession; whilst the royal captives who followed in the train were slowly moved along, amidst the horrid yells, and shrilling screams, and frantic dances, and infamous contumelies, and all the unutterable abominations of the furies of hell, in the abused shape of the vilest of women. After they had been made to taste, drop by drop, more than the bitterness of death, in the slow torture of a journey of twelve miles, protracted to six hours, they were, under a guard, composed of those very soldiers who had thus conducted them through 30 this famous triumph, lodged in one of the old palaces of Paris, now converted into a bastille for kings.

Is this a triumph to be consecrated at altars? to be commemorated with grateful thanksgiving? to be offered to the divine humanity with fervent prayer and enthusiastic ejaculation?—These Theban and Thracian Orgies, acted in France,

and applauded only in the Old Jewry, I assure you, kindle prophetic enthusiasm in the minds but of very few people in this kingdom; although a saint and apostle, who may have revelations of his own, and who has so completely vanquished all the mean superstitions of the heart, may incline to think it pious and decorous to compare it with the entrance into the world of the Prince of Peace, proclaimed in an holy temple by a venerable sage, and not long before not worse announced by the voice of angels to the quiet innocence of  
10 shepherds.

At first I was at a loss to account for this fit of unguarded transport. I knew, indeed, that the sufferings of monarchs make a delicious repast to some sort of palates. There were reflexions which might serve to keep this appetite within some bounds of temperance. But when I took one circumstance into my consideration, I was obliged to confess, that much allowance ought to be made for the Society, and that the temptation was too strong for common discretion. I mean, the circumstance of the *Io Pæan* of the triumph, the  
20 animating cry which called 'for all the BISHOPS to be hanged on the lamp-posts,'\* might well have brought forth a burst of enthusiasm on the foreseen consequences of this happy day. I allow to so much enthusiasm some little deviation from prudence. I allow this prophet to break forth into hymns of joy and thanksgiving on an event which appears like the precursor of the Millennium, and the projected fifth monarchy, in the destruction of all church establishments. There was, however, (as in all human affairs there is) in the midst of this joy something to exercise the patience of these  
30 worthy gentlemen, and to try the long-suffering of their faith. The actual murder of the king and queen, and their child, was wanting to the other auspicious circumstances of this '*beautiful day*.' The actual murder of the bishops, though called for by so many holy ejaculations, was also wanting. A group of regicide and sacrilegious slaughter

\* Tous les Evêques à la lanterne.

was indeed boldly sketched, but it was only sketched. It unhappily was left unfinished, in this great history-piece of the massacre of innocents. What hardy pencil of a great master, from the school of the rights of men, will finish it, is to be seen hereafter. The age has not yet the complete benefit of that diffusion of knowledge that has undermined superstition and error; and the king of France wants another object or two to consign to oblivion, in consideration of all the good which is to arise from his own sufferings, and the patriotic crimes of an enlightened age.\* 10

\* It is proper here to refer to a letter written upon this subject by an eye-witness. That eye-witness was one of the most honest, intelligent, and eloquent members of the National Assembly, one of the most active and zealous reformers of the state. He was obliged to secede from the assembly; and he afterwards became a voluntary exile, on account of the horrors of this pious triumph, and the dispositions of men, who, profiting of crimes, if not causing them, have taken the lead in public affairs.

EXTRACT of M. de Lally-Tollendal's Second Letter to a Friend.

'Parlons du parti que j'ai pris; il est bien justifié dans ma conscience. Ni cette ville coupable, ni cette assemblée plus coupable encore, ne méritoient que je me justifie; mais j'ai à cœur que vous, et les personnes qui pensent comme vous, ne me condamnent pas. Ma santé, je vous jure, me rendoit mes fonctions impossibles; mais même en les mettant de côté il a été au-dessus de mes forces de supporter plus long-tems l'horreur que me causoit ce sang,—ces têtes,—cette reine presque égorgée,—ce roi amené esclave, entrant à Paris, au milieu de ses assassins, et précédé des têtes de ses malheureux gardes,—ces perfides janissaires,—ces assassins,—ces femmes cannibales,—ce cri de, TOUTS LES ÉVÊQUES À LA LANTERNE, dans le moment où le roi entre sa capitale avec deux évêques de son conseil dans sa voiture. Un coup de fusil, que j'ai vu tirer dans un des carrosses de la reine. M. Bailly appelant cela un beau jour. L'assemblée ayant déclaré froidement le matin, qu'il n'étoit pas de sa dignité d'aller toute entière environner le roi. M. Mirabeau disant impunément dans cette assemblée, que le vaisseau de l'état, loins d'être arrêté dans sa course, s'élanceroit avec plus de rapidité que jamais vers sa régénération. M. Barnave, riant avec lui, quand des flots de sang couloient autour de nous. Le vertueux Mounier\* échappant par miracle à vingt assassins, qui avoient voulu faire de sa tête un trophée de plus.

'Voilà ce qui me fit jurer de ne plus mettre le pied dans cette caverne d'Anthropophages [the National Assembly] où je n'avois plus

\* N.B. Mr. Mounier was then speaker of the National Assembly. He has since been obliged to live in exile, though one of the firmest assertors of liberty.

, Although this work of our new light and knowledge did not go to the length that in all probability it was intended it should be carried, yet I must think that such treatment of any human creatures must be shocking to any but those who are made for accomplishing Revolutions. But I cannot stop here. Influenced by the inborn feelings of my nature, and not being illuminated by a single ray of this new-sprung modern light, I confess to you, Sir, that the exalted rank of the persons suffering, and particularly the sex, the beauty, 10 and the amiable qualities of the descendant of so many kings

de force d'élever la voix, ou depuis six semaines je l'avois élevée en vain. Moi, Mounier, et tous les honnêtes gens, ont pensé que le dernier effort à faire pour le bien étoit d'en sortir. Aucune idée de crainte ne s'est approchée de moi. Je rougirois de m'en défendre. J'avois encore reçu sur la route de la part de ce peuple, moins coupable que ceux qui l'ont enivré de fureur, des acclamations, et des applaudissemens, dont d'autres auroient été flattés, et qui m'ont fait frémir. C'est à l'indignation, c'est à l'horreur, c'est aux convulsions physiques, que le seul aspect du sang me fait éprouver que j'ai cédé. On bravo une seule mort ; on la brave plusieurs fois, quand elle peut être utile. Mais aucune puissance sous le ciel, mais aucune opinion publique ou privée n'ont le droit de me condamner à souffrir inutilement mille supplices par minute, et à périr de désespoir, de rage, au milieu des *triumphes*, du crime que je n'ai pu arrêter. Ils me proscrireont, il confisqueront mes biens. Je labourerai la terre, et je ne les verrai plus.—Voilà ma justification. Vous pourrez la lire, la montrer, la laisser copier ; tant pis pour ceux qui ne la comprendront pas ; ce ne sera alors moi qui auroit eu tort de la leur donner.

. This military man had not so good nerves as the peaceable gentlemen of the Old Jewry.—See Mons. Mounier's narrative of these transactions ; a man also of honour and virtue, and talents, and therefore a fugitive.

['Let us speak of the course which I have followed : it is quite justified to my conscience. Neither this guilty town nor this still more guilty assembly deserved that I should justify myself : but I am anxious that you, and those who think as you do, should not condemn me. My health, I swear to you, made it impossible for me to perform my duties : but even when I had given them up I was not strong enough any longer to support the horror which was inspired in me by this blood,—these heads,—this queen almost butchered,—this king, led like a slave, entering Paris in the midst of his assassins, and preceded by the heads of his unfortunate guards,—these treacherous janissaries,—these assassins,—these cannibal women,—this cry of *All the bishops to the lamp-post* at the very moment when the king was entering his capital with two bishops of his council in his carriage. A shot which I saw fired at one of the queen's carriages. Monsieur Bailly calling that a *beautiful day*. The assembly having coolly declared in the

and emperors, with the tender age of royal infants, insensible only through infancy and innocence of the cruel outrages to which their parents were exposed, instead of being a subject of exultation, adds not a little to my sensibility on that most melancholy occasion.

I hear that the august person, who was the principal object of our preacher's triumph, though he supported himself, felt much on that shameful occasion. As a man, it became him to feel for his wife and his children, and the faithful guards of his person, that were massacred in cold blood about him. 10 As a prince, it became him to feel for the strange and frightful transformation of his civilized subjects, and to be more grieved for them, than solicitous for himself. It derogates little from his fortitude, while it adds infinitely to the honour of his humanity. I am very sorry to say it, very sorry indeed,

morning, that it was not consistent with its dignity to go in a body to attend the king. Monsieur Mirabeau saying with impunity in that assembly, that the ship of the state, far from being delayed in its course, would dart forward with more speed than ever towards its regeneration. Monsieur Barnave smiling with him when streams of blood were flowing around us. The virtuous Mounier escaping by a miracle from twenty assassins, who wished to make one trophy more of his head.

'These are the things which made me swear never again to set foot in that den of cannibals [the National Assembly], where I was no longer strong enough to raise my voice, and where for six weeks I had raised it in vain. Mounier, myself, and all honest men, have agreed that the last effort to be made for good was to leave it. No idea of fear has come near me. I should blush to defend myself from such a charge. I had already received on the journey from this people, which is less guilty than those that have made it drunk with fury, shouts of applause, by which others would have been flattered, and which made me shudder. The mere sight of blood makes me feel that I have yielded to indignation, to horror, and to physical spasms. One faces death once: one faces it often when anything would be gained by dying. But no power under heaven, no opinion, public or private, has the right to condemn me to suffer uselessly a thousand punishments a minute, and to perish of despair and rage in the midst of triumphs and of crimes which I could not prevent. They will proscribe me, they will confiscate my goods. I will till the ground, and will never see them more.—This is my justification. You can read it, show it, have it copied; so much the worse for those who will not understand it; then I shall have not been in the wrong in giving it to them.']

that such personages are in a situation in which it is not unbecoming in us to praise the virtues of the great.

I hear, and I rejoice to hear, that the great lady, the other object of the triumph, has borne that day (one is interested that beings made for suffering should suffer well) and that she bears all the succeeding days, that she bears the imprisonment of her husband, and her own captivity, and the exile of her friends, and the insulting adulation of addresses, and the whole weight of her accumulated wrongs, with a serene  
10 patience, in a manner suited to her rank and race, and becoming the offspring of a sovereign distinguished for her piety and her courage; that like her she has lofty sentiments; that she feels with the dignity of a Roman matron; that in the last extremity she will save herself from the last disgrace, and that if she must fall, she will fall by no ignoble hand.

It is now sixteen or seventeen years since I saw the queen of France, then the dauphiness, at Versailles; and surely never lighted on this orb, which she hardly seemed to touch, a more  
20 delightful vision. I saw her just above the horizon, decorating and cheering the elevated sphere she just began to move in; glittering like the morning star, full of life, and splendor, and joy. Oh! what a revolution! and what an heart must I have, to contemplate without emotion that elevation and that fall! Little did I dream when she added titles of veneration to those of enthusiastic, distant, respectful love, that she should ever be obliged to carry the sharp antidote against disgrace concealed in that bosom; little did I dream that I  
30 should have lived to see such disasters fallen upon her in a nation of gallant men, in a nation of men of honour and of cavaliers. I thought ten thousand swords must have leaped from their scabbards to avenge even a look that threatened her with insult.—But the age of chivalry is gone. That of sophisters, economists, and calculators, has succeeded; and the glory of Europe is extinguished for ever. Never, never



more, shall we behold that generous loyalty to rank and sex, that proud submission, that dignified obedience, that subordination of the heart, which kept alive, even in servitude itself, the spirit of an exalted freedom. The unbought grace of life, the cheap defence of nations, the nurse of manly sentiment and heroic enterprise, is gone ! It is gone, that sensibility of principle, that chastity of honour, which felt a stain like a wound, which inspired courage whilst it mitigated ferocity, which ennobled whatever it touched, and under which vice itself lost half its evil, by losing all its grossness.

This mixed system of opinion and sentiment had its origin in the ancient chivalry ; and the principle, though varied in its appearance by the varying state of human affairs, subsisted and influenced through a long succession of generations, even to the time we live in. If it should ever be totally extinguished, the loss I fear will be great. It is this which has given its character to modern Europe. It is this which has distinguished it under all its forms of government, and distinguished it to its advantage, from the states of Asia, and possibly from those states which flourished in the most brilliant periods of the antique world. It was this, which, without confounding ranks, had produced a noble equality, and handed it down through all the gradations of social life. It was this opinion which mitigated kings into companions, and raised private men to be fellows with kings. Without force, or opposition, it subdued the fierceness of pride and power ; it obliged sovereigns to submit to the soft collar of social esteem, compelled stern authority to submit to elegance, and gave a domination vanquisher of laws, to be subdued by 30 manners.

But now all is to be changed. All the pleasing illusions, which made power gentle, and obedience liberal, which harmonized the different shades of life, and which, by a bland assimilation, incorporated into politics the sentiments which beautify and soften private society, are to be dissolved by this

new conquering empire of light and reason. All the decent drapery of life is to be rudely torn off. All the superadded ideas, furnished from the wardrobe of a moral imagination, which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies, as necessary to cover the defects of our naked shivering nature, and to raise it to dignity in our own estimation, are to be exploded as a ridiculous, absurd, and antiquated fashion.

On this scheme of things, a king is but a man ; a queen is but a woman ; a woman is but an animal ; and an animal not  
10 of the highest order. All homage paid to the sex in general as such, and without distinct views, is to be regarded as romance and folly. Regicide, and parricide, and sacrilege, are but fictions of superstition, corrupting jurisprudence by destroying its simplicity. The murder of a king, or a queen, or a bishop, or a father, are only common homicide ; and if the people are by any chance, or in any way gainers by it, a sort of homicide much the most pardonable, and into which we ought not to make too severe a scrutiny.

On the scheme of this barbarous philosophy, which is the  
20 offspring of cold hearts and muddy understandings, and which is as void of solid wisdom, as it is destitute of all taste and elegance, laws are to be supported only by their own terrors, and by the concern which each individual may find in them from his own private speculations, or can spare to them from his own private interests. In the groves of *their* academy, at the end of every vista, you see nothing but the gallows. Nothing is left which engages the affections on the part of the commonwealth. On the principles of this mechanic philosophy, our institutions can never be embodied,  
30 if I may use the expression, in persons ; so as to create in us love, veneration, admiration, or attachment. But that sort of reason which banishes the affections is incapable of filling their place. These public affections, combined with manners, are required sometimes as supplements, sometimes as correctives, always as aids to law. The precept given by a wise man, as well as a great critic, for the construction of

poems, is equally true as to states. *Non satis est pulchra esse poemata, dulcia suntu—*

[*Mere grace is not enough ; a play should thrill  
The hearer's soul, and move it at its will*].

There ought to be a system of manners in every nation which a well-formed mind would be disposed to relish. To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.

But power, of some kind or other, will survive the shock in which manners and opinions perish ; and it will find other and worse means for its support. The usurpation which, in 10 order to subvert ancient institutions, has destroyed ancient principles, will hold power by arts similar to those by which it has acquired it. When the old feudal and chivalrous spirit of *Fealty*, which, by freeing kings from fear, freed both kings and subjects from the precautions of tyranny, shall be extinct in the minds of men, plots and assassinations will be anticipated by preventive murder and preventive confiscation, and that long roll of grim and bloody maxims, which form the political code of all power, not standing on its own honour, and the honour of those who are to obey it. Kings 20 will be tyrants from policy when subjects are rebels from principle.

When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away, the loss cannot possibly be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to govern us ; nor can we know distinctly to what port we steer. Europe undoubtedly, taken in a mass, was in a flourishing condition the day on which your Revolution was completed. How much of that prosperous state was owing to the spirit of our old manners and opinions is not easy to say ; but as such causes cannot 30 be indifferent in their operation, we must presume, that, on the whole, their operation was beneficial.

We are but too apt to consider things in the state in which we find them, without sufficiently adverting to the causes by which they have been produced, and possibly may be upheld. Nothing is more certain, than that our manners, our civi-

lization, and all the good things which are connected with manners, and with civilization, have, in this European world of ours, depended for ages upon two principles ; and were indeed the result of both combined ; I mean the spirit of a gentleman, and the spirit of religion. The nobility and the clergy, the one by profession, the other by patronage, kept learning in existence, even in the midst of arms and confusions, and whilst governments were rather in their causes than formed. Learning paid back what it received to  
 10 nobility and to priesthood ; and paid it with usury, by enlarging their ideas, and by furnishing their minds. Happy if they had all continued to know their indissoluble union, and their proper place ! Happy if learning, not debauched by ambition, had been satisfied to continue the instructor, and not aspired to be the master ! Along with its natural protectors and guardians, learning will be cast into the mire, and trodden down under the hoofs of a swinish  
 multitude.\*

If, as I suspect, modern letters owe more than they are  
 20 always willing to own to ancient manners, so do other interests which we value full as much as they are worth. Even commerce, and trade, and manufacture, the gods of our oeconomical politicians, are themselves perhaps but creatures ; are themselves but effects, which, as first causes, we choose to worship. They certainly grew under the same shade in which learning flourished. They too may decay with their natural protecting principles. With you, for the present at least, they all threaten to disappear together. Where trade and manufactures are wanting to a people, and  
 30 the spirit of nobility and religion remains, sentiment supplies, and not always ill supplies their place ; but if commerce and the arts should be lost in an experiment to try how well a state may stand without these old funda-

\* See the fate of Bailly and Condorcet, supposed to be here particularly alluded to. Compare the circumstances of the trial and execution of the former with this prediction.

mental principles, what sort of a thing must be a nation of gross, stupid, ferocious, and at the same time, poor and sordid barbarians, destitute of religion, honour, or manly pride, possessing nothing at present, and hoping for nothing hereafter?

I wish you may not be going fast, and by the shortest cut, to that horrible and disgusting situation. Already there appears a poverty of conception, a coarseness and vulgarity in all the proceedings of the assembly and of all their instructors. Their liberty is not liberal. Their science is 10 presumptuous ignorance. Their humanity is savage and brutal.

It is not clear, whether in England we learned those grand and decorous principles, and manners, of which considerable traces yet remain, from you, or whether you took them from us. But to you, I think, we trace them best. You seem to me to be '*gentis incunabula nostræ*' [*The cradle of our race*]. France has always more or less influenced manners in England; and when your fountain is choked up and polluted, the stream will not run long, or not run clear with 20 us, or perhaps with any nation. This gives all Europe, in my opinion, but too close and connected a concern in what is done in France. Excuse me, therefore, if I have dwelt too long on the atrocious spectacle of the sixth of October 1789, or have given too much scope to the reflections which have arisen in my mind on occasion of the most important of all revolutions, which may be dated from that day, I mean a revolution in sentiments, manners, and moral opinions. As things now stand, with every thing respectable destroyed without us, and an attempt to destroy within us every 30 principle of respect, one is almost forced to apologize for harbouring the common feelings of men.

Why do I feel so differently from the Reverend Dr. Price, and those of his lay flock, who will choose to adopt the sentiments of his discourse? For this plain reason—because it is *natural*. I should; because we are so made as

to be affected at such spectacles with melancholy sentiments upon the unstable condition of mortal prosperity, and the tremendous uncertainty of human greatness; because in those natural feelings we learn great lessons; because in events like these our passions instruct our reason; because when kings are hurled from their thrones by the Supreme Director of this great drama, and become the objects of insult to the base, and of pity to the good, we behold such disasters in the moral, as we should behold a miracle in  
10 the physical order of things. We are alarmed into reflexion; our minds (as it has long since been observed) are purified by terror and pity; our weak unthinking pride is humbled, under the dispensations of a mysterious wisdom. Some tears might be drawn from me, if such a spectacle were exhibited on the stage. I should be truly ashamed of finding in myself that superficial, theatric sense of painted distress, whilst I could exult over it in real life. With such a perverted mind, I could never venture to shew my face at a tragedy. People would think the tears that Garrick  
20 formerly, or that Siddons not long since, have extorted from me, were the tears of hypocrisy; I should know them to be the tears of folly.

Indeed the theatre is a better school of moral sentiments than churches, where the feelings of humanity are thus outraged. Poets, who have to deal with an audience not yet graduated in the school of the rights of men, and who must apply themselves to the moral constitution of the heart, would not dare to produce such a triumph as a matter of exultation. There, where men follow their natural impulses, they would  
30 not bear the odious maxims of a Machiavelian policy, whether applied to the attainment of monarchical or democratic tyranny. They would reject them on the modern, as they once did on the ancient stage; where they could not bear even the hypothetical proposition of such wickedness in the mouth of a personated tyrant, though suitable to the character he sustained. No theatric audience in Athens would bear what

has been borne, in the midst of the real tragedy of this triumphal day; a principal actor weighing, as it were in scales hung in a shop of horrors, so much actual crime against so much contingent advantage, and after putting in and out weights, declaring that the balance was on the side of the advantages. They would not bear to see the crimes of new democracy posted as in a ledger against the crimes of old despotism, and the book-keepers of politics finding democracy still in debt, but by no means unable or unwilling to pay the balance. In the theatre, the first intuitive glance, without 10 any elaborate process of reasoning, would shew, that this method of political computation would justify every extent of crime. They would see, that on these principles, even where the very worst acts were not perpetrated, it was owing rather to the fortune of the conspirators than to their parsimony in the expenditure of treachery and blood. They would soon see, that criminal means once tolerated are soon preferred. They present a shorter cut to the object than through the highway of the moral virtues. Justifying perfidy and murder for public benefit, public benefit would soon become 20 the pretext, and perfidy and murder the end; until rapacity, malice, revenge, and fear more dreadful than revenge, could satiate their insatiable appetites. Such must be the consequences of losing, in the splendour of these triumphs of the rights of men, all natural sense of wrong and right.

But the Reverend Pastor exults in this 'leading in triumph,' because, truly, Louis the XVIth was 'an arbitrary monarch;' that is, in other words, neither more nor less, than because he was Louis the XVIth, and because he had the misfortune to be born king of France, with the prerogatives of which, a 30 long line of ancestors, and a long acquiescence of the people, without any act of his, had put him in possession. A misfortune it has indeed turned out to him, that he was born king of France. But misfortune is not crime, nor is indiscretion always the greatest guilt. I shall never think that a prince, the acts of whose whole reign were a series of conces-

sions to his subjects, who was willing to relax his authority, to remit his prerogatives, to call his people to a share of freedom, not known, perhaps not desired, by their ancestors; such a prince, though he should be subject to the common frailties attached to men and to princes, though he should have once thought it necessary to provide force against the desperate designs manifestly carrying on against his person, and the remnants of his authority; though all this should be taken into consideration, I shall be led with great difficulty to think  
 10 he deserves the cruel and insulting triumph of Paris, and of Dr. Price. I tremble for the cause of liberty, from such an example to kings. I tremble for the cause of humanity, in the unpunished outrages of the most wicked of mankind. But there are some people of that low and degenerate fashion of mind, that they look up with a sort of complacent awe and admiration to kings, who know to keep firm in their seat, to hold a strict hand over their subjects, to assert their prerogative, and by the awakened vigilance of a severe despotism, to guard against the very first approaches of freedom. Against  
 20 such as these they never elevate their voice. Deserters from principle, listed with fortune, they never see any good in suffering virtue, nor any crime in prosperous usurpation.

If it could have been made clear to me, that the king and queen of France (those I mean who were such before the triumph) were inexorable and cruel tyrants, that they had formed a deliberate scheme for massacring the National Assembly (I think I have seen something like the latter insinuated in certain publications) I should think their captivity just. If this be true, much more ought to have been done, but done,  
 30 in my opinion, in another manner. The punishment of real tyrants is a noble and awful act of justice; and it has with truth been said to be consolatory to the human mind. But if I were to punish a wicked king, I should regard the dignity in avenging the crime. Justice is grave and decorous, and in its punishments rather seems to submit to a necessity, than to make a choice. Had Nero, or Agrippina, or Louis the



Eleventh, or Charles the Ninth, been the subject ; if Charles the Twelfth of Sweden, after the murder of Patkul, or his predecessor Christina, after the murder of Monaldeschi, had fallen into your hands, Sir, or into mine, I am sure our conduct would have been different.

If the French King, or King of the French, (or by whatever name he is known in the new vocabulary of your constitution) has in his own person, and that of his Queen, really deserved these unavowed but unavenged murderous attempts, and those subsequent indignities more cruel than murder, such a person 10 would ill deserve even that subordinate executory trust, which I understand is to be placed in him ; nor is he fit to be called chief of a nation which he has outraged and oppressed. A worse choice for such an office in a new commonwealth, than that of a deposed tyrant, could not possibly be made. But to degrade and insult a man as the worst of criminals, and afterwards to trust him in your highest concerns, as a faithful, honest, and zealous servant, is not consistent in reasoning, nor prudent in policy, nor safe in practice. Those who could make such an appointment must be guilty of a more flagrant 20 breach of trust than any they have yet committed against the people. As this is the only crime in which your leading politicians could have acted inconsistently, I conclude that there is no sort of ground for these horrid insinuations. I think no better of all the other calumnies.

In England, we give no credit to them. We are generous enemies : we are faithful allies. We spurn from us with disgust and indignation the slanders of those who bring us their anecdotes with the attestation of the flower-de-luce on their shoulder. We have Lord George Gordon fast in Newgate ; 30 and neither his being a public proselyte to Judaism, nor his having, in his zeal against Catholic priests and all sorts of ecclesiastics, raised a mob (excuse the term, it is still in use here) which pulled down all our prisons, have preserved to him a liberty, of which he did not render himself worthy by a virtuous use of it. We have rebuilt Newgate, and tenanted

the mansion. We have prisons almost as strong as the Bastile, for those who dare to libel the queens of France. In this spiritual retreat, let the noble libeller remain. Let him there meditate on his Thalmud, until he learns a conduct more becoming his birth and parts, and not so disgraceful to the ancient religion to which he has become a proselyte; or until some persons from your side of the water, to please your new Hebrew brethren, shall ransom him. He may then be enabled to purchase, with the old hoards of the synagogue, 10 and a very small poundage on the long compound interest of the thirty pieces of silver (Dr. Price has shewn us what miracles compound interest will perform in 1790 years) the lands which are lately discovered to have been usurped by the Gallican church. Send us your popish Archbishop of Paris, and we will send you our protestant Rabbin. We shall treat the person you send us in exchange like a gentleman and an honest man, as he is; but pray let him bring with him the fund of his hospitality, bounty, and charity; and, depend upon it, we shall never confiscate a shilling of 20 that honourable and pious fund, nor think of enriching the treasury with the spoils of the poor-box.

To tell you the truth, my dear Sir, I think the honour of our nation to be somewhat concerned in the disclaimer of the proceedings of this society of the Old Jewry and the London Tavern. I have no man's proxy. I speak only from myself, when I disclaim, as I do with all possible earnestness, all communion with the actors in that triumph, or with the admirers of it. When I assert anything else, as concerning the people of England, I speak from observation, not from 30 authority; but I speak from the experience I have had in a pretty extensive and mixed communication with the inhabitants of this kingdom, of all descriptions and ranks, and after a course of attentive observation, began early in life, and continued for near forty years. I have often been astonished, considering that we are divided from you but by a slender

dyke of about twenty-four miles, and that the mutual intercourse between the two countries has lately been very great, to find how little you seem to know of us. I suspect that this is owing to your forming a judgment of this nation from certain publications, which do very erroneously, if they do at all, represent the opinions and dispositions generally prevalent in England. The vanity, restlessness, petulance, and spirit of intrigue of several petty cabals, who attempt to hide their total want of consequence in bustle and noise, and puffing, and mutual quotation of each other, makes you imagine that 10 our contemptuous neglect of their abilities is a mark of general acquiescence in their opinions. No such thing, I assure you. Because half a dozen grasshoppers under a fern make the field ring with their importunate chink, whilst thousands of great cattle, reposed beneath the shadow of the British oak, chew the cud and are silent, pray do not imagine, that those who make the noise are the only inhabitants of the field; that, of course, they are many in number; or that, after all, they are other than the little shrivelled, meagre, hopping, though loud and troublesome insects of the hour. 20

I almost venture to affirm, that not one in a hundred amongst us participates in the 'triumph' of the Revolution Society. If the king and queen of France, and their children, were to fall into our hands by the chance of war, in the most acrimonious of all hostilities (I deprecate such an event, I deprecate such hostility) they would be treated with another sort of triumphal entry into London. We formerly have had a king of France in that situation; you have read how he was treated by the victor in the field; and in what manner he was afterwards received in England. Four hundred years have 30 gone over us; but I believe we are not materially changed since that period. Thanks to our sullen resistance to innovation, thanks to the cold sluggishness of our national character, we still bear the stamp of our forefathers. We have not, as I conceive, lost the generosity and dignity of thinking of the fourteenth century; nor as yet have we subtilized ourselves

into savages. We are not the converts of Rousseau ; we are not the disciples of Voltaire ; Helvetius has made no progress amongst us. Atheists are not our preachers ; madmen are not our lawgivers. We know that *we* have made no discoveries, and we think that no discoveries are to be made, in morality ; nor many in the great principles of government, nor in the ideas of liberty, which were understood long before we were born, altogether as well as they will be after the grave has heaped its mould upon our presumption, and the  
 10 silent tomb shall have imposed its law on our pert loquacity. In England we have not yet been completely embowelled of our natural entrails ; we still feel within us, and we cherish and cultivate, those inbred sentiments which are the faithful guardians, the active monitors of our duty, the true supporters of all liberal and manly morals. We have not been drawn and trussed, in order that we may be filled, like stuffed birds in a museum, with chaff and rags, and paltry blurred shreds of paper about the rights of man. We preserve the whole of our feelings still native and entire, unsophisticated by pedan-  
 20 try and infidelity. We have real hearts of flesh and blood beating in our bosoms. We fear God ; we look up with awe to kings ; with affection to parliaments ; with duty to magistrates ; with reverence to priests ; and with respect to nobility.\* Why ? Because when such ideas are brought before our minds, it is *natural* to be so affected ; because all other feelings are false and spurious, and tend to corrupt our minds, to vitiate our primary morals, to render us unfit for rational liberty ; and by teaching us a servile, licentious, and

\* The English are, I conceive, misrepresented in a Letter published in one of the papers, by a gentleman thought to be a dissenting minister.—When writing to Dr. Price of the spirit which prevails at Paris, he says, ‘The spirit of the people in this place has abolished all the proud *distinctions* which the *king* and *nobles* had usurped in their minds ; whether they talk of *the king*, *the noble*, or *the priest*, their whole language is that of the most *enlightened* and *liberal* amongst the *English*.’ If this gentleman means to confine the terms *enlightened* and *liberal* to one set of men in England, it may be true. It is not generally so.

abandoned insolence, to be our low sport for a few holidays, to make us perfectly fit for, and justly deserving of slavery, through the whole course of our lives.

You see, Sir, that in this enlightened age I am bold enough to confess, that we are generally men of untaught feelings; that instead of casting away all our old prejudices, we cherish them to a very considerable degree, and, to take more shame to ourselves, we cherish them because they are prejudices; and the longer they have lasted, and the more generally they have prevailed, the more we cherish them. We are afraid to 10 put men to live and trade each on his own private stock of reason; because we suspect that this stock in each man is small, and that the individuals would do better to avail themselves of the general bank and capital of nations and of ages. Many of our men of speculation, instead of exploding general prejudices, employ their sagacity to discover the latent wisdom which prevails in them. If they find what they seek, (and they seldom fail) they think it more wise to continue the prejudice, with the reason involved, than to cast away the coat of prejudice, and to leave nothing but the naked reason; 20 because prejudice, with its reason, has a motive to give action to that reason, and an affection which will give it permanence. Prejudice is of ready application in the emergency; it previously engages the mind in a steady course of wisdom and virtue, and does not leave the man hesitating in the moment of decision, sceptical, puzzled, and unresolved. Prejudice renders a man's virtue his habit; and not a series of unconnected acts. Through just prejudice, his duty becomes a part of his nature.

Your literary men, and your politicians, and so do the 30 whole clan of the enlightened among us, essentially differ in these points. They have no respect for the wisdom of others; but they pay it off by a very full measure of confidence in their own. With them it is a sufficient motive to destroy an old scheme of things, because it is an old one. As to the new, they are in no sort of fear with regard to the

duration of a building run up in haste ; because duration is no object to those who think little or nothing has been done before their time, and who place all their hopes in discovery. They conceive, very systematically, that all things which give perpetuity are mischievous, and therefore they are at inexorable war with all establishments. They think that government may vary like modes of dress, and with as little ill effect. That there needs no principle of attachment, except a sense of present convenience, to any constitution of  
10 the state. They always speak as if they were of opinion that there is a singular species of compact between them and their magistrates, which binds the magistrate, but which has nothing reciprocal in it, but that the majesty of the people has a right to dissolve it without any reason, but its will. Their attachment to their country itself, is only so far as it agrees with some of their fleeting projects ; it begins and ends with that scheme of polity which falls in with their momentary opinion.

These doctrines, or rather sentiments, seem prevalent with  
20 your new statesmen. But they are wholly different from those on which we have always acted in this country.

I hear it is sometimes given out in France, that what is doing among you is after the example of England. I beg leave to affirm, that scarcely anything done with you has originated from the practice or the prevalent opinions of this people, either in the act or in the spirit of the proceeding. Let me add, that we are as unwilling to learn these lessons from France, as we are sure that we never taught them to that nation. The cabals here who take a sort of  
30 share in your transactions as yet consist but of an handful of people. If unfortunately by their intrigues, their sermons, their publications, and by a confidence derived from an expected union with the counsels and forces of the French nation, they should draw considerable numbers into their faction, and in consequence should seriously attempt any thing here in imitation of what has been done with you, the

event, I dare venture to prophesy, will be, that, with some trouble to their country, they will soon accomplish their own destruction. This people refused to change their law in remote ages from respect to the infallibility of popes ; and they will not now alter it from a pious implicit faith in the dogmatism of philosophers ; though the former was armed with the anathema and crusade, and though the latter should act with the libel and the lamp-iron.

Formerly your affairs were your own concern only. We felt for them as men ; but we kept aloof from them, 10 because we were not citizens of France. But when we see the model held up to ourselves, we must feel as Englishmen, and feeling, we must provide as Englishmen. Your affairs, in spite of us, are made a part of our interest ; so far at least as to keep at a distance your panacea, or your plague. If it be a panacea, we do not want it. We know the consequences of unnecessary physic. If it be a plague, it is such a plague, that the precautions of the most severe quarantine ought to be established against it.

I hear on all hands that a cabal, calling itself philosophic, 20 receives the glory of many of the late proceedings ; and that their opinions and systems are the true actuating spirit of the whole of them. I have heard of no party in England, literary or political, at any time, known by such a description. It is not with you composed of those men, is it ? whom the vulgar, in their blunt, homely style, commonly call Atheists and Infidels ? If it be, I admit that we too have had writers of that description, who made some noise in their day. At present they repose in lasting oblivion. Who, born within the last forty years, has read 30 one word of Collins, and Toland, and Tindal, and Chubb, and Morgan, and that whole race who call themselves Free-thinkers ? Who now reads Bolingbroke ? Who ever read him through ? Ask the booksellers of London what has become of all these lights of the world. In a few years their few successors will go to the family vault of 'all the

- Capulets.' But whatever they were, or are, with us, they were and are wholly unconnected individuals. With us they kept the common nature of their kind, and were not gregarious. They never acted in corps, nor were known as a faction in the state, nor presumed to influence, in that name or character, or for the purposes of such a faction, on any of our public concerns. Whether they ought so to exist, and so be permitted to act, is another question. As such cabals have not existed in England, so neither has the spirit
- 10 of them had any influence in establishing the original frame of our constitution, or in any one of the several reparations and improvements it has undergone. The whole has been done under the auspices, and is confirmed by the sanctions of religion and piety. The whole has emanated from the simplicity of our national character, and from a sort of native plainness and directness of understanding, which for a long time characterized those men who have successively obtained authority amongst us. This disposition still remains, at least in the great body of the people.
- 20 We know, and what is better, we feel inwardly, that religion is the basis of civil society, and the source of all good and of all comfort.\* In England we are so convinced of this, that there is no rust of superstition, with which the accumulated absurdity of the human mind might have crusted it over in the course of ages, that ninety-nine in an

\* *Sit igitur hoc ab initio persuasum civibus, dominos esse omnium rerum ac moderatores deos; eaque, quæ gerantur, eorum geri vitione ac numine: eosdemque optime de genere hominum mereri; et qualis quisque sit, quid agat, quid in se admittat, qua mente, qua pietate colat religiones intueri; piorum et impiorum habere rationem. His enim rebus imbutæ mentes haud sane abhorrebunt ab utili et a vera sententia. Cic. de Legibus, l. 2. [Let the citizens first of all be convinced that the gods are the lords and rulers of all things; and that whatever happens is done by their power, authority, and direction: and that they deserve well of the race of men; and that they see what is the character of every man, what he does, of what offences he is guilty, with what feeling of piety he attends to the rites of religion; that they take account of the good and the bad. For minds impressed with these convictions will certainly not be averse from opinion which is useful and true.]*



hundred of the people of England would not prefer to impiety. We shall never be such fools as to call in an enemy to the substance of any system to remove its corruptions, to supply its defects, or to perfect its construction. If our religious tenets should ever want a further elucidation, we shall not call on atheism to explain them. We shall not light up our temple from that unhallowed fire. It will be illuminated with other lights. It will be perfumed with other incense than the infectious stuff which is imported by the smugglers of adulterated metaphysics. If our ecclesiastical establishment should want a revision, it is not avarice or rapacity, public or private, that we shall employ for the audit, or receipt, or application, of its consecrated revenue. Violently condemning neither the Greek nor the Armenian, nor, since heats are subsided, the Roman system of religion, we prefer the Protestant; not because we think it has less of the Christian religion in it, but because, in our judgment, it has more. We are protestants, not from indifference, but from zeal.

We know, and it is our pride to know, that man is by his constitution a religious animal; that atheism is against, not only our reason, but our instincts; and that it cannot prevail long. But if, in the moment of riot, and in a drunken delirium from the hot spirit drawn out of the alembic of hell, which in France is now so furiously boiling, we should uncover our nakedness by throwing off that Christian religion which has hitherto been our boast and comfort, and one great source of civilization amongst us, and among many other nations, we are apprehensive (being well aware that the mind will not endure a void) that some uncouth, pernicious, and degrading superstition, might take place of it. For that reason, before we take from our establishment the natural human means of estimation, and give it up to contempt, as you have done, and in doing it have incurred the penalties you well deserve to suffer, we desire that some other may be presented

to us in the place of it. We shall then form our judgment.

On these ideas, instead of quarrelling with establishments, as some do, who have made a philosophy and a religion of their hostility to such institutions, we cleave closely to them. We are resolved to keep an established church, an established monarchy, an established aristocracy, and an established democracy, each in the degree it exists, and in no greater. I shall shew you presently how much of each of these we  
10 possess.

It has been the misfortune, not as these gentlemen think it, the glory, of this age, that every thing is to be discussed ; as if the constitution of our country were to be always a subject rather of altercation than enjoyment. For this reason, as well as for the satisfaction of those among you (if any such you have among you) who may wish to profit of examples, I venture to trouble you with a few thoughts upon each of these establishments. I do not think they were  
unwise in ancient Rome, who, when they wished to new-  
20 model their laws, sent commissioners to examine the best constituted republics within their reach.

FIRST, I beg leave to speak of our church establishment, which is the first of our prejudices ; not a prejudice destitute of reason, but involving in it profound and extensive wisdom. I speak of it first. It is first, and last, and midst in our minds. For, taking ground on that religious system, of which we are now in possession, we continue to act on the early received and uniformly continued sense of mankind. That sense not only, like a wise architect, hath built up the  
30 august fabric of states, but, like a provident proprietor, to preserve the structure from profanation and ruin, as a sacred temple, purged from all the impurities of fraud, and violence, and injustice, and tyranny, hath solemnly and for ever consecrated the commonwealth, and all that officiate in it. This consecration is made, that all who administer

in the government of men, in which they stand in the person of God himself, should have high and worthy notions of their function and destination ; that their hope should be full of immortality ; that they should not look to the paltry pelf of the moment, nor to the temporary and transient praise of the vulgar, but to a solid, permanent existence, in the permanent part of their nature, and to a permanent fame and glory, in the example they leave as a rich inheritance to the world.

Such sublime principles ought to be infused into persons of exalted situations ; and religious establishments provided, 10 that may continually revive and enforce them. Every sort of moral, every sort of civil, every sort of politic institution, aiding the rational and natural ties that connect the human understanding and affections to the divine, are not more than necessary, in order to build up that wonderful structure, Man ; whose prerogative it is, to be in a great degree a creature of his own making ; and who, when made as he ought to be made, is destined to hold no trivial place in the creation. But whenever man is put over men, as the better nature ought ever to preside, in that case more particularly, 20 he should as nearly as possible be approximated to his perfection.

This consecration of the state, by a state religious establishment, is necessary also to operate with an wholesome awe upon free citizens ; because, in order to secure their freedom, they must enjoy some determinate portion of power. To them therefore a religion connected with the state, and with their duty towards it, becomes even more necessary than in such societies, where the people by the terms of their subjection are confined to private sentiments, and the management 30 of their own family concerns. All persons possessing any portion of power ought to be strongly and awfully impressed with an idea that they act in trust ; and that they are to account for their conduct in that trust to the one great master, author, and founder of society.

This principle ought even to be more strongly impressed

upon the minds of those who compose the collective sovereignty than upon those of single princes. Without instruments, these princes can do nothing. Whoever uses instruments, in finding helps, finds also impediments. Their power is therefore by no means complete ; nor are they safe in extreme abuse. Such persons, however elevated by flattery, arrogance, and self-opinion, must be sensible that, whether covered or not by positive law, in some way or other they are accountable even here for the abuse of their trust. If they are not  
10 cut off by a rebellion of their people, they may be strangled by the very Janissaries kept for their security against all other rebellion. Thus we have seen the king of France sold by his soldiers for an increase of pay. But where popular authority is absolute and unrestrained, the people have an infinitely greater, because a far better founded confidence in their own power. They are themselves, in a great measure, their own instruments. They are nearer to their objects. Besides, they are less under responsibility to one of the greatest controlling powers on earth, the sense of fame and  
20 estimation. The share of infamy that is likely to fall to the lot of each individual in public acts, is small indeed ; the operation of opinion being in the inverse ratio to the number of those who abuse power. Their own approbation of their own acts has to them the appearance of a public judgment in their favour. A perfect democracy is therefore the most shameless thing in the world. As it is the most shameless, it is also the most fearless. No man apprehends in his person he can be made subject to punishment. Certainly the people at large never  
30 ought : for as all punishments are for example towards the conservation of the people at large, the people at large can never become the subject of punishment by any human hand.\* It is therefore of infinite importance that they should not be suffered to imagine that their will, any more than that of

\* *Quicquid multis peccatur inultum. [The sins of multitudes go unpunished.]*

kings, is the standard of right and wrong. They ought to be persuaded that they are full as little entitled, and far less qualified, with safety to themselves, to use any arbitrary power whatsoever ; that therefore they are not, under a false show of liberty, but, in truth, to exercise an unnatural inverted domination, tyrannically to exact, from those who officiate in the state, not an entire devotion to their interest, which is their right, but an abject submission to their occasional will ; extinguishing thereby, in all those who serve them, all moral principle, all sense of dignity, all use of judgment, and all consistency of character, whilst by the very same process they give themselves up a proper, a suitable, but a most contemptible prey to the servile ambition of popular sycophants or courtly flatterers. 10

When the people have emptied themselves of all the lust of selfish will, which without religion it is utterly impossible they ever should, when they are conscious that they exercise, and exercise perhaps in an higher link of the order of delegation, the power, which to be legitimate must be according to that eternal immutable law, in which will and reason are the same, 20 they will be more careful how they place power in base and incapable hands. In their nomination to office, they will not appoint to the exercise of authority, as to a pitiful job, but as to an holy function ; not according to their sordid selfish interest, nor to their wanton caprice, nor to their arbitrary will ; but they will confer that power (which any man may well tremble to give or to receive) on those only, in whom they may discern that predominant proportion of active virtue and wisdom, taken together and fitted to the charge, such, as in the great and inevitable mixed 30 mass of human imperfections and infirmities, is to be found.

When they are habitually convinced that no evil can be acceptable, either in the act or the permission, to him whose essence is good, they will be better able to extirpate out of the minds of all magistrates, civil, ecclesiastical, or military,

any thing that bears the least resemblance to a proud and lawless domination.

But one of the first and most leading principles on which the commonwealth and the laws are consecrated, is lest the temporary possessors and life-renters in it, unmindful of what they have received from their ancestors, or of what is due to their posterity, should act as if they were the entire masters; that they should not think it amongst their rights to cut off the entail, or commit waste on the inheritance, by destroying  
10 at their pleasure the whole original fabric of their society; hazarding to leave to those who come after them a ruin instead of an habitation, and teaching these successors as little to respect their contrivances, as they had themselves respected the institutions of their forefathers. By this unprincipled facility of changing the state as often, and as much, and in as many ways, as there are floating fancies or fashions, the whole chain and continuity of the commonwealth would be broken. No one generation could link with the other. Men would become little better than the flies of a summer.

20 And first of all, the science of jurisprudence, the pride of the human intellect, which, with all its defects, redundancies, and errors, is the collected reason of ages, combining the principles of original justice with the infinite variety of human concerns, as a heap of old exploded errors, would be no longer studied. Personal self-sufficiency and arrogance, the certain attendants upon all those who have never experienced a wisdom greater than their own, would usurp the tribunal. Of course, no certain laws, establishing invariable grounds of hope and fear, would keep the actions of men in a certain  
30 course, or direct them to a certain end. Nothing stable in the modes of holding property, or exercising function, could form a solid ground on which any parent could speculate in the education of his offspring, or in a choice for their future establishment in the world. No principles would be early worked into the habits. As soon as the most able instructor had completed his laborious course of institution, instead of

sending forth his pupil, accomplished in a virtuous discipline, fitted to procure him attention and respect, in his place in society, he would find everything altered ; and that he had turned out a poor creature to the contempt and derision of the world, ignorant of the true grounds of estimation. Who would insure a tender and delicate sense of honour to beat almost with the first pulses of the heart, when no man could know what would be the test of honour in a nation, continually varying the standard of its coin ? No part of life would retain its acquisitions. Barbarism with regard to science and 10 literature, unskilfulness with regard to arts and manufactures, would infallibly succeed to the want of a steady education and settled principle ; and thus the commonwealth itself would, in a few generations, crumble away, be disconnected into the dust and powder of individuality, and at length dispersed to all the winds of heaven.

To avoid therefore the evils of inconstancy and versatility, ten thousand times worse than those of obstinacy and the blindest prejudice, we have *consecrated* the state ; that no man should approach to look into its defects or corruptions but 20 with due caution ; that he should never dream of beginning its reformation by its subversion ; that he should approach to the faults of the state as to the wounds of a father, with pious awe and trembling solicitude. By this wise prejudice we are taught to look with horror on those children of their country who are prompt rashly to hack that aged parent in pieces, and put him into the kettle of magicians, in hopes that by their poisonous weeds, and wild incantations, they may regenerate the paternal constitution, and renovate their father's life.

30

Society is indeed a contract. Subordinate contracts, for objects of mere occasional interest, may be dissolved at pleasure ; but the state ought not to be considered as nothing better than a partnership agreement in a trade of pepper and coffee, calico or tobacco, or some other such low concern, to be taken up for a little temporary interest, and to be dissolved

by the fancy of the parties. It is to be looked on with other reverence ; because it is not a partnership in things subservient only to the gross animal existence of a temporary and perishable nature. It is a partnership in all science ; a partnership in all art ; a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection. As the ends of such a partnership cannot be obtained in many generations, it becomes a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are living, those who are dead, and those who are to be born.

- 10 Each contract of each particular state is but a clause in the great primæval contract of eternal society, linking the lower with the higher natures, connecting the visible and invisible world, according to a fixed compact sanctioned by the inviolable oath which holds all physical and all moral natures, each in their appointed place. This law is not subject to the will of those, who by an obligation above them, and infinitely superior, are bound to submit their will to that law. The municipal corporations of that universal kingdom are not morally at liberty at their pleasure, and on their speculations
- 20 of a contingent improvement, wholly to separate and tear asunder the bands of their subordinate community, and to dissolve it into an unsocial, uncivil, unconnected chaos of elementary principles. It is the first and supreme necessity only, a necessity that is not chosen but chooses, a necessity paramount to deliberation, that admits no discussion, and demands no evidence, which alone can justify a resort to anarchy. This necessity is no exception to the rule ; because this necessity itself is a part too of that moral and physical disposition of things to which man must be obedient by con-
- 30 sent or force. But if that which is only submission to necessity should be made the object of choice, the law is broken ; nature is disobeyed ; and the rebellious are outlawed, cast forth, and exiled, from this world of reason, and order, and peace, and virtue, and fruitful penitence, into the antagonist world of madness, discord, vice, confusion, and un-availing sorrow.



These, my dear Sir, are, were, and I think long will be the sentiments of not the least learned and reflecting part of this kingdom. They who are included in this description form their opinions on such grounds as such persons ought to form them. The less enquiring receive them from an authority which those whom Providence dooms to live on trust need not be ashamed to rely on. These two sorts of men move in the same direction, though in a different place. They both move with the order of the universe. They all know or feel this great ancient truth : 'Quod illi principi et 10 præpotenti Deo qui omnem hunc mundum regit, nihil eorum quæ quidem fiant in terris acceptius quam concilia et cœtus hominum jure sociati quæ civitates appellantur' [*That to the great and all-powerful God who rules this universe nothing is more pleasing than the unions and gatherings of men bound together by laws which are called states*]. They take this tenet of the head and heart, not from the great name which it immediately bears, nor from the greater from whence it is derived ; but from that which alone can give true weight and sanction to any learned opinion, the common nature and 20 common relation of men. Persuaded that all things ought to be done with reference, and referring all to the point of reference to which all should be directed, they think themselves bound, not only as individuals in the sanctuary of the heart, or as congregated in that personal capacity, to renew the memory of their high origin and cast ; but also in their corporate character to perform their national homage to the institutor, and author and protector of civil society ; without which civil society man could not by any possibility arrive at the perfection of which his nature is capable, nor even 30 make a remote and faint approach to it. They conceive that He who gave our nature to be perfected by our virtue, willed also the necessary means of its perfection. He willed therefore the state ; He willed its connection with the source and original archetype of all perfection. They who are convinced of this his will, which is the law of laws and the

sovereign of sovereigns, cannot think it reprehensible, that this our corporate fealty and homage, that this our recognition of a seignior paramount, I had almost said this oblation of the state itself, as a worthy offering on the high altar of universal praise, should be performed, as all public solemn acts are performed, in buildings, in music, in decoration, in speech, in the dignity of persons, according to the customs of mankind, taught by their nature ; that is, with modest splendour, with unassuming state, with mild majesty and  
10 sober pomp. For those purposes they think some part of the wealth of the country is as usefully employed, as it can be in fomenting the luxury of individuals. It is the public ornament. It is the public consolation. It nourishes the public hope. The poorest man finds his own importance and dignity in it, whilst the wealth and pride of individuals at every moment makes the man of humble rank and fortune sensible of his inferiority, and degrades and vilifies his condition. It is for the man in humble life, and to raise his nature, and to put him in mind of a state in which the  
20 privileges of opulence will cease, when he will be equal by nature, and may be more than equal by virtue—that this portion of the general wealth of his country is employed and sanctified.

I assure you I do not aim at singularity. I give you opinions which have been accepted amongst us, from very early times to this moment, with a continued and general approbation ; and which indeed are so worked into my mind, that I am unable to distinguish what I have learned from others from the results of my own meditation.

30 It is on some such principles that the majority of the people of England, far from thinking a religious national establishment unlawful, hardly think it lawful to be without one. In France you are wholly mistaken if you do not believe us above all other things attached to it, and beyond all other nations ; and when this people has acted unwisely and unjustifiably in its favour (as in some instances they

have done most certainly) in their very errors you will at least discover their zeal.

This principle runs through the whole system of their polity. They do not consider their church establishment as convenient, but as essential to their state; not as a thing heterogeneous and separable; something added for accommodation; what they may either keep up or lay aside, according to their temporary ideas of convenience. They consider it as the foundation of their whole constitution, with which, and with every part of which, it holds an indissoluble union. Church and state are ideas inseparable in their minds, and scarcely is the one ever mentioned without mentioning the other.

Our education is so formed as to confirm and fix this impression. Our education is in a manner wholly in the hands of ecclesiastics, and in all stages from infancy to manhood. Even when our youth, leaving schools and universities, enter that most important period of life which begins to link experience and study together, and when with that view they visit other countries, instead of old domestics whom we have seen as governors to principal men from other parts, three-fourths of those who go abroad with our young nobility and gentlemen are ecclesiastics; not as austere masters, nor as mere followers; but as friends and companions of a graver character, and not seldom persons as well born as themselves. With them, as relations, they most commonly keep up a close connexion through life. By this connexion we conceive that we attach our gentlemen to the church; and we liberalize the church by an intercourse with the leading characters of the country.

30

So tenacious are we of the old ecclesiastical modes and fashions of institution, that very little alteration has been made in them since the fourteenth or fifteenth century; adhering in this particular, as in all things else, to our old settled maxim, never entirely nor at once to depart from antiquity. We found these old institutions, on the whole,

favourable to morality and discipline ; and we thought they were susceptible of amendment, without altering the ground. We thought that they were capable of receiving and meliorating, and above all of preserving, the accessions of science and literature, as the order of Providence should successively produce them. And after all, with this Gothic and monkish education (for such it is in the ground-work) we may put in our claim to as ample and as early a share in all the improvements in science, in arts, and in literature, which have  
10 illuminated and adorned the modern world, as any other nation in Europe ; we think one main cause of this improvement was our not despising the patrimony of knowledge which was left us by our forefathers.

It is from our attachment to a church establishment that the English nation did not think it wise to entrust that great fundamental interest of the whole to what they trust no part of their civil or military public service, that is, to the unsteady and precarious contribution of individuals. They go further. They certainly never have suffered and never will suffer the  
20 fixed estate of the church to be converted into a pension, to depend on the treasury, and to be delayed, withheld, or perhaps to be extinguished by fiscal difficulties ; which difficulties may sometimes be pretended for political purposes, and are in fact often brought on by the extravagance, negligence, and rapacity of politicians. The people of England think that they have constitutional motives, as well as religious, against any project of turning their independent clergy into ecclesiastical pensioners of state. They tremble for their liberty from the influence of a clergy dependent on  
30 the crown ; they tremble for the public tranquillity from the disorders of a factious clergy, if it were made to depend upon any other than the crown. They therefore made their church, like their king and their nobility, independent.

From the united considerations of religion and constitutional policy, from their opinion of a duty to make sure provision for the consolation of the feeble and the instruction

of the ignorant, they have incorporated and identified the estate of the church with the mass of *private property*, of which the state is not the proprietor, either for use or dominion, but the guardian only and the regulator. They have ordained that the provision of this establishment might be as stable as the earth on which it stands, and should not fluctuate with the Euripus of funds and actions.

The men of England, the men, I mean, of light and leading in England, whose wisdom (if they have any) is open and direct, would be ashamed, as of a silly deceitful trick, to 10 profess any religion in name, which by their proceedings they appeared to contemn. If by their conduct (the only language that rarely lies) they seemed to regard the great ruling principle of the moral and the natural world, as a mere invention to keep the vulgar in obedience, they apprehend that by such a conduct they would defeat the politic purpose they have in view. They would find it difficult to make others to believe in a system to which they manifestly gave no credit themselves. The Christian statesmen of this land would indeed first provide for the *multitude*; because it 20 is the *multitude*; and is therefore, as such, the first object in the ecclesiastical institution, and in all institutions. They have been taught that the circumstance of the gospel's being preached to the poor was one of the great tests of its true mission. They think, therefore, that those do not believe it, who do not take care it should be preached to the poor. But as they know that charity is not confined to any one description, but ought to apply itself to all men who have wants, they are not deprived of a due and anxious sensation of pity to the distresses of the miserable great. They are not 30 repelled through a fastidious delicacy, at the stench of their arrogance and presumption, from a medicinal attention to their mental blotches and running sores. They are sensible, that religious instruction is of more consequence to them than to any others; from the greatness of the temptation to which they are exposed; from the important consequences

that attend their faults ; from the contagion of their ill example ; from the necessity of bowing down the stubborn neck of their pride and ambition to the yoke of moderation and virtue ; from a consideration of the fat stupidity and gross ignorance concerning what imports men most to know, which prevails at courts, and at the head of armies, and in senates, as much as at the loom and in the field.

The English people are satisfied, that to the great the consolations of religion are as necessary as its instructions.

10 They too are among the unhappy. They feel personal pain and domestic sorrow. In these they have no privilege, but are subject to pay their full contingent to the contributions levied on mortality. They want this sovereign balm under their gnawing cares and anxieties, which being less conversant about the limited wants of animal life, range without limit, and are diversified by infinite combinations in the wild and unbounded regions of imagination. Some charitable dole is wanting to these, our often very unhappy brethren, to fill the gloomy void that reigns in minds which have nothing

20 on earth to hope or fear ; something to relieve in the killing languor and over-laboured lassitude of those who have nothing to do ; something to excite an appetite to existence in the palled satiety which attends on all pleasures which may be bought, where nature is not left to her own process, where even desire is anticipated, and therefore fruition defeated by meditated schemes and contrivances of delight ; and no interval, no obstacle, is interposed between the wish and the accomplishment.

The people of England know how little influence the

30 teachers of religion are likely to have with the wealthy and powerful of long standing, and how much less with the newly fortunate, if they appear in a manner no way assorted to those with whom they must associate, and over whom they must even exercise, in some cases, something like an authority. What must they think of that body of teachers, if they see it in no part above the establishment of their

domestic servants? If the poverty were voluntary, there might be some difference. Strong instances of self-denial operate powerfully on our minds; and a man who has no wants has obtained great freedom and firmness, and even dignity. But as the mass of any description of men are but men, and their poverty cannot be voluntary, that disrespect which attends upon all lay poverty, will not depart from the ecclesiastical. Our provident constitution has therefore taken care that those who are to instruct presumptuous ignorance, those who are to be censors over insolent vice, should 10 neither incur their contempt, nor live upon their alms; nor will it tempt the rich to a neglect of the true medicine of their minds. For these reasons, whilst we provide first for the poor, and with a parental solicitude, we have not relegated religion, like something we were ashamed to shew, to obscure municipalities or rustic villages. No! We will have her to exalt her mitred front in courts and parliaments. We will have her mixed throughout the whole mass of life, and blended with all the classes of society. The people of England will shew to the haughty potentates of the world, 20 and to their talking sophisters, that a free, a generous, an informed nation honours the high magistrates of its church; that it will not suffer the insolence of wealth and titles, or any other species of proud pretension, to look down with scorn upon what they look up to with reverence; nor presume to trample on that acquired personal nobility, which they intend always to be, and which often is the fruit, not the reward, (for what can be the reward?) of learning, piety, and virtue. They can see, without pain or grudging, an Archbishop precede a Duke. They can see a Bishop of 30 Durham, or a Bishop of Winchester, in possession of ten thousand pounds a year; and cannot conceive why it is in worse hands than estates to the like amount in the hands of this Earl, or that Squire; although it may be true, that so many dogs and horses are not kept by the former, and fed with the victuals which ought to nourish the children of the

people. It is true, the whole church revenue is not always employed, and to every shilling, in charity ; nor perhaps ought it ; but something is generally so employed. It is better to cherish virtue and humanity, by leaving much to free will, even with some loss to the object, than to attempt to make men mere machines and instruments of a political benevolence. The world on the whole will gain by a liberty, without which virtue cannot exist.

WHEN once the commonwealth has established the estates  
 10 of the church as property, it can, consistently, hear nothing  
 of the more or the less. Too much and too little are treason  
 against property. What evil can arise from the quantity in  
 any hand, whilst the supreme authority has the full, sove-  
 reign superintendence over this, as over all property, to pre-  
 vent every species of abuse ; and, whenever it notably de-  
 viates, to give to it a direction agreeable to the purposes of  
 its institution.

In England most of us conceive that it is envy and  
 malignity towards those who are often the beginners of  
 20 their own fortune, and not a love of the self-denial and  
 mortification of the ancient church that makes some look  
 askance at the distinctions, and honours, and revenues,  
 which, taken from no person, are set apart for virtue. The  
 ears of the people of England are distinguishing. They hear  
 these men speak broad. Their tongue betrays them. Their  
 language is in the *patois* of fraud ; in the cant and gibberish  
 of hypocrisy. The people of England must think that  
 these praters affect to carry back the clergy to that primeval  
 evangelic poverty which, in the spirit, ought always to exist  
 30 in them, (and in us too, however we may like it) but the  
 thing must be varied, when the relation of that body to the  
 state is altered ; when manners, when modes of life, when  
 indeed the whole order of human affairs has undergone  
 total revolution. We shall believe those reformers to be  
 then honest enthusiasts, not as now we think them, cheats



and deceivers, when we see them throwing their own goods into common, and submitting their own persons to the austere discipline of the early church.

With these ideas rooted in their minds, the commons of Great Britain, in the national emergencies, will never seek their resource from the confiscation of the estates of the church and poor. Sacrilege and proscription are not among the ways and means in our committee of supply. The Jews in Change Alley have not yet dared to hint their hopes of a mortgage on the revenues belonging to the see of Canterbury. I am not afraid that I shall be disavowed, when I assure you that there is not *one* public man in this kingdom, whom you would wish to quote; no not one of any party or description, who does not reprobate the dishonest, perfidious, and cruel confiscation which the national assembly has been compelled to make of that property which it was their first duty to protect.

It is with the exultation of a little national pride I tell you, that those amongst us who have wished to pledge the societies of Paris in the cup of their abominations, have been disappointed. The robbery of your church has proved a security to the possessions of ours. It has roused the people. They see with horror and alarm that enormous and shameless act of proscription. It has opened, and will more and more open their eyes upon the selfish enlargement of mind, and the narrow liberality of sentiment of insidious men, which commencing in close hypocrisy and fraud have ended in open violence and rapine. At home we behold similar beginnings. We are on our guard against similar conclusions. 30

I hope we shall never be so totally lost to all sense of the duties imposed upon us by the law of social union, as, upon any pretext of public service, to confiscate the goods of a single unoffending citizen. Who but a tyrant (a name expressive of every thing which can vitiate and degrade human nature) could think of seizing on the property of men, un-

- accused, unheard, untried, by whole descriptions, by hundreds and thousands together? who that had not lost every trace of humanity could think of casting down men of exalted rank and sacred function, some of them of an age to call at once for reverence and compassion—of casting them down from the highest situation in the commonwealth, wherein they were maintained by their own landed property, to a state of indigence, depression and contempt?

The confiscators truly have made some allowance to their  
 10 victims from the scraps and fragments of their own tables from which they have been so harshly driven, and which have been so bountifully spread for a feast to the harpies of usury. But to drive men from independence to live on alms is itself great cruelty. That which might be a tolerable condition to men in one state of life, and not habituated to other things, may, when all these circumstances are altered, be a dreadful revolution; and one to which a virtuous mind would feel pain in condemning any guilt except that which would demand the life of the offender. But to many minds  
 20 this punishment of degradation and infamy is worse than death. Undoubtedly it is an infinite aggravation of this cruel suffering, that the persons who were taught a double prejudice in favour of religion, by education and by the place they held in the administration of its functions, are to receive the remnants of their property as alms from the profane and impious hands of those who had plundered them of all the rest; to receive (if they are at all to receive) not from the charitable contributions of the faithful, but from the insolent tenderness of known and avowed Atheism, the  
 30 maintenance of religion, measured out to them on the standard of the contempt in which it is held; and for the purpose of rendering those who receive the allowance vile and of no estimation in the eyes of mankind.

But this act of seizure of property, it seems, is a judgment in law, and not a confiscation. They have, it seems, found out in the academies of the *Palais Royal*, and the *Jacobins*,

that certain men had no right to the possessions which they held under law, usage, the decisions of courts, and the accumulated prescription of a thousand years. They say that ecclesiastics are fictitious persons, creatures of the state; whom at pleasure they may destroy, and of course limit and modify in every particular; that the goods they possess are not properly theirs, but belong to the state which created the fiction; and we are therefore not to trouble ourselves with what they may suffer in their natural feelings and natural persons, on account of what is done towards them 10 in this their constructive character. Of what import is it under what names you injure men, and deprive them of the just emoluments of a profession, in which they were not only permitted but encouraged by the state to engage; and upon the supposed certainty of which emoluments they had formed the plan of their lives, contracted debts, and led multitudes to an entire dependence upon them?

You do not imagine, Sir, that I am going to compliment this miserable distinction of persons with any long discussion. The arguments of tyranny are as contemptible as its force is 20 dreadful. Had not your confiscators by their early crimes obtained a power which secures indemnity to all the crimes of which they have since been guilty, or that they can commit, it is not the syllogism of the logician, but the lash of the executioner that would have refuted a sophistry which becomes an accomplice of theft and murder. The sophistic tyrants of Paris are loud in their declamations against the departed regal tyrants who in former ages have vexed the world. They are thus bold, because they are safe from the dungeons and iron cages of their old masters. Shall we 30 be more tender of the tyrants of our own time, when we see them acting worse tragedies under our eyes? Shall we not use the same liberty that they do, when we can use it with the same safety? when to speak honest truth only requires a contempt of the opinions of those whose actions we abhor?

This outrage on all the rights of property was at first covered with what, on the system of their conduct, was the most astonishing of all pretexts—a regard to national faith. The enemies to property at first pretended a most tender, delicate, and scrupulous anxiety for keeping the king’s engagements with the public creditor. These professors of the rights of men are so busy in teaching others, that they have not leisure to learn any thing themselves ; otherwise they would have known that it is to the property of the  
10 citizen, and not to the demands of the creditor of the state, that the first and original faith of civil society is pledged. The claim of the citizen is prior in time, paramount in title, superior in equity. The fortunes of individuals, whether possessed by acquisition, or by descent, or in virtue of a participation in the goods of some community, were no part of the creditor’s security, expressed or implied. They never so much as entered into his head when he made his bargain. He well knew that the public, whether represented by a monarch, or by a senate, can pledge nothing but the public  
20 estate ; and it can have no public estate, except in what it derives from a just and proportioned imposition upon the citizens at large. This was engaged, and nothing else could be engaged, to the public creditor. No man can mortgage his injustice as a pawn for his fidelity.

It is impossible to avoid some observation on the contradictions caused by the extreme rigour and the extreme laxity of the new public faith which influenced in this transaction, and which influenced not according to the nature of the obligation, but to the description of the persons to whom it  
30 was engaged. No acts of the old government of the kings of France are held valid in the National Assembly, except its pecuniary engagements ; acts of all others of the most ambiguous legality. The rest of the acts of that royal government are considered in so odious a light, that to have a claim under its authority is looked on as a sort of crime. A pension, given as a reward for service to the state, is surely as good a ground

of property as any security for money advanced to the state. It is a better; for money is paid, and well paid, to obtain that service. We have however seen multitudes of people under this description in France, who never had been deprived of their allowances by the most arbitrary ministers in the most arbitrary times, by this assembly of the rights of men robbed without mercy. They were told, in answer to their claim to the bread earned with their blood, that their services had not been rendered to the country that now exists.

This laxity of public faith is not confined to those unfortunate persons. The assembly (with perfect consistency it must be owned) is engaged in a respectable deliberation how far it is bound by the treaties made with other nations under the former government, and their Committee is to report which of them they ought to ratify, and which not. By this means they have put the external fidelity of this virgin state on a par with its internal.

It is not easy to conceive upon what rational principle the royal government should not, of the two, rather have possessed the power of rewarding service, and making treaties, 10 in virtue of its prerogative, than that of pledging to creditors the revenue of the state actual and possible. The treasure of the nation, of all things, has been the least allowed to the prerogative of the king of France, or to the prerogative of any king in Europe. To mortgage the public revenue implies the sovereign dominion, in the fullest sense, over the public purse. It goes far beyond the trust even of a temporary and occasional taxation. The acts however of that dangerous power (the distinctive mark of a boundless despotism) have been alone held sacred. Whence arose this preference given 20 by a democratic assembly to a body of property deriving its title from the most critical and obnoxious of all the exertions of monarchical authority? Reason can furnish nothing to reconcile inconsistency; nor can partial favour be accounted for upon equitable principles. But the contradiction and partiality which admit no justification, are not the less with-

out an adequate cause; and that cause I do not think it difficult to discover.

By the vast debt of France a great monied interest had insensibly grown up, and with it a great power. By the ancient usages which prevailed in that kingdom, the general circulation of property, and in particular the mutual convertibility of land into money, and of money into land, had always been a matter of difficulty. Family settlements, rather more general and more strict than they are in England; the *jus retractus*, [*the right of recovery*]; the great mass of landed property held by the crown, and by a maxim of the French law held unalienably; the vast estates of the ecclesiastic corporations; all these had kept the landed and monied interests more separated in France, less miscible, and the owners of the two distinct species of property not so well disposed to each other as they are in this country.

The monied property was long looked on with rather an evil eye by the people. They saw it connected with their distresses, and aggravating them. It was no less envied by the old landed interests, partly for the same reasons that rendered it obnoxious to the people, but much more so as it eclipsed, by the splendour of an ostentatious luxury, the unendowed pedigrees and naked titles of several among the nobility. Even when the nobility, which represented the more permanent landed interest, united themselves by marriage (which sometimes was the case) with the other description, the wealth which saved the family from ruin, was supposed to contaminate and degrade it. Thus the enmities and heart-burnings of these parties were increased even by the usual means by which discord is made to cease, and quarrels are turned into friendship. In the mean time, the pride of the wealthy men, not noble or newly noble, increased with its cause. They felt with resentment an inferiority, the grounds of which they did not acknowledge. There was no measure to which they were not willing to lend themselves, in order to be revenged of the outrages of this rival pride, and to exalt

their wealth to what they considered as its natural rank and estimation. They struck at the nobility through the crown and the church. They attacked them particularly on the side on which they thought them the most vulnerable, that is, the possessions of the church, which, through the patronage of the crown, generally devolved upon the nobility. The bishoprics, and the great commendatory abbeys, were, with few exceptions, held by that order.

In this state of real, though not always perceived warfare between the noble ancient landed interest, and the new monied 10 interest, the greatest because the most applicable strength was in the hands of the latter. The monied interest is in its nature more ready for any adventure; and its possessors more disposed to new enterprises of any kind. Being of a recent acquisition, it falls in more naturally with any novelties. It is therefore the kind of wealth which will be resorted to by all who wish for change.

Along with the monied interest, a new description of men had grown up, with whom that interest soon formed a close and marked union; I mean the political Men of Letters. 20 Men of Letters, fond of distinguishing themselves, are rarely averse to innovation. Since the decline of the life and greatness of Lewis the XIVth, they were not so much cultivated either by him, or by the regent, or the successors to the crown; nor were they engaged to the court by favours and emoluments so systematically as during the splendid period of that ostentatious and not impolitic reign. What they lost in the old court protection, they endeavoured to make up by joining in a sort of incorporation of their own; to which the two academies of France, and afterwards the vast undertaking 30 of the Encyclopædia, carried on by a society of these gentlemen, did not a little contribute.

The literary cabal had some years ago formed something like a regular plan for the destruction of the Christian religion. This object they pursued with a degree of zeal which hitherto had been discovered only in the propagators of some system

of piety. They were possessed with a spirit of proselytism in the most fanatical degree; and from thence by an easy progress, with the spirit of persecution according to their means.<sup>b</sup> What was not to be done towards their great end by any direct or immediate act, might be wrought by a longer process through the medium of opinion. To command that opinion, the first step is to establish a dominion over those who direct it. They contrived to possess themselves, with great method and perseverance, of all the avenues to  
 10 literary fame. Many of them indeed stood high in the ranks of literature and science. The world had done them justice; and in favour of general talents forgave the evil tendency of their peculiar principles. This was true liberality; which they returned by endeavouring to confine the reputation of sense, learning, and taste to themselves or their followers. I will venture to say that this narrow, exclusive spirit has not been less prejudicial to literature and to taste, than to morals and true philosophy. These Atheistical fathers have a bigotry of their own; and they have learnt to talk against  
 20 monks with the spirit of a monk. But in some things they are men of the world. The resources of intrigue are called in to supply the defects of argument and wit. To this system of literary monopoly was joined an unremitting industry to blacken and discredit in every way, and by every means, all those who did not hold to their faction. To those who have observed the spirit of their conduct, it has long been clear that nothing was wanted but the power of carrying the intolerance of the tongue and of the pen into a persecution which would strike at property, liberty, and life.  
 30 The desultory and faint persecution carried on against them, more from compliance with form and decency than with serious resentment, neither weakened their strength, nor relaxed their efforts. The issue of the whole was, that what

<sup>b</sup> This, down to the end of the first sentence in the next paragraph, and some other parts here and there, were inserted, on his reading the manuscript, by my lost Son.



with opposition, and what with success, a violent and malignant zeal, of a kind hitherto unknown in the world, had taken an entire possession of their minds, and rendered their whole conversation, which otherwise would have been pleasing and instructive, perfectly disgusting. A spirit of cabal, intrigue, and proselytism, pervaded all their thoughts, words, and actions. And, as controversial zeal soon turns its thoughts on force, they began to insinuate themselves into a correspondence with foreign princes; in hopes, through their authority, which at first they flattered, they might bring about 10 the changes they had in view. To them it was indifferent whether these changes were to be accomplished by the thunderbolt of despotism, or by the earthquake of popular commotion. The correspondence between this cabal, and the late king of Prussia, will throw no small light upon the spirit of all their proceedings.\* For the same purpose for which they intrigued with princes, they cultivated, in a distinguished manner, the monied interest of France; and partly through the means furnished by those whose peculiar offices gave them the most extensive and certain means of communication, 20 they carefully occupied all the avenues to opinion.

Writers, especially when they act in a body, and with one direction, have great influence on the public mind; the alliance therefore of these writers with the monied interest<sup>c</sup> had no small effect in removing the popular odium and envy which attended that species of wealth. These writers, like the propagators of all novelties, pretended to a great zeal for the poor, and the lower orders, whilst in their satires they rendered hateful, by every exaggeration, the faults of courts, of nobility, and of priesthood. They became a sort of dema- 30 gogues. They served as a link to unite, in favour of one object, obnoxious wealth to restless and desperate poverty.

\* I do not choose to shock the feeling of the moral reader with any quotation of their vulgar, base, and profane language.

<sup>c</sup> Their connexion with Turgot and almost all the people of the finance.

As these two kinds of men appear principal leaders in all the late transactions, their junction and politics will serve to account, not upon any principles of law or of policy, but as a *cause*, for the general fury with which all the landed property of ecclesiastical corporations has been attacked; and the great care which, contrary to their pretended principles, has been taken, of a monied interest originating from the authority of the crown. All the envy against wealth and power, was artificially directed against other descriptions of riches.

- 10 On what other principle than that which I have stated can we account for an appearance so extraordinary and unnatural as that of the ecclesiastical possessions, which had stood so many successions of ages and shocks of civil violences, and were guarded at once by justice, and by prejudice, being applied to the payment of debts, comparatively recent, invidious, and contracted by a decried and subverted government?

- Was the public estate a sufficient stake for the public debts? Assume that it was not, and that a loss *must* be incurred somewhere—When the only estate lawfully possessed, and which the contracting parties had in contemplation at the time in which their bargain was made, happens to fail, who, according to the principles of natural and legal equity, ought to be the sufferer? Certainly it ought to be either the party who trusted; or the party who persuaded him to trust; or both; and not third parties who had no concern with the transaction. Upon any insolvency they ought to suffer who were weak enough to lend upon bad security, or they who fraudulently held out a security that
- 20 was not valid. Laws are acquainted with no other rules of decision. But by the new institute of the rights of men, the only persons, who in equity ought to suffer, are the only persons who are to be saved harmless: those are to answer the debt who neither were lenders or borrowers, mortgagees or mortgagees.

What had the clergy to do with these transactions? What

had they to do with any public engagement further than the extent of their own debt? To that, to be sure, their estates were bound to the last acre. Nothing can lead more to the true spirit of the assembly, which sits for public confiscation, with its new equity and its new morality, than an attention to their proceeding with regard to this debt of the clergy. The body of confiscators, true to that monied interest for which they were false to every other, have found the clergy competent to incur a legal debt. Of course they declared them legally entitled to the property which their power of 10 incurring the debt and mortgaging the estate implied; recognising the rights of those persecuted citizens, in the very act in which they were thus grossly violated.

If, as I said, any persons are to make good deficiencies to the public creditor, besides the public at large, they must be those who managed the agreement. Why therefore are not the estates of all the comptrollers general confiscated?<sup>d</sup> Why not those of the long succession of ministers, financiers, and bankers who have been enriched whilst the nation was impoverished by their dealings and their counsels? Why is 20 not the estate of Mr. Laborde declared forfeited rather than of the archbishop of Paris, who has had nothing to do in the creation or in the jobbing of the public funds? Or, if you must confiscate old landed estates in favour of the money-jobbers, why is the penalty confined to one description? I do not know whether the expenses of the duke de Choiseul have left any thing of the infinite sums which he had derived from the bounty of his master, during the transactions of a reign which contributed largely, by every species of prodigality in war and peace, to the present debt of France. If 30 any such remains, why is not this confiscated?—I remember to have been in Paris during the time of the old government. I was there just after the duke d'Aiguillon had been snatched (as it was generally thought) from the block by the hand of a protecting despotism. He was a minister, and had some

<sup>d</sup> All have been confiscated in their turn.

concern in the affairs of that prodigal period. Why do I not see his estate delivered up to the municipalities in which it is situated? The noble family of Noailles have long been servants (meritorious servants I admit) to the crown of France, and have had of course some share in its bounties. Why do I hear nothing of the application of their estates to the public debt? Why is the estate of the duke de Rochefoucault more sacred than that of the cardinal de Rochefoucault? The former is, I doubt not, a worthy person ;  
 10 and (if it were not a sort of profaneness to talk of the use, as affecting the title to property) he makes a good use of his revenues ; but it is no disrespect to him to say, what authentic information well warrants me in saying, that the use made of a property equally valid, by his brother<sup>e</sup> the cardinal archbishop of Rouen, was far more laudable and far more public-spirited. Can one hear of the proscription of such persons, and the confiscation of their effects, without indignation and horror? He is not a man who does not feel such emotions on such occasions. He does  
 20 not deserve the name of a free man who will not express them.

Few barbarous conquerors have ever made so terrible a revolution in property. None of the heads of the Roman factions, when they established '*crudelem illam hastam*' [*That cruel sale*], in all their auctions of rapine, have ever set up to sale the goods of the conquered citizen to such an enormous amount. It must be allowed in favour of those tyrants of antiquity, that what was done by them could hardly be said to be done in cold blood. Their passions  
 30 were inflamed, their tempers soured, their understandings confused, with the spirit of revenge, with the innumerable reciprocated and recent inflictions and retaliations of blood and rapine. They were driven beyond all bounds of moderation by the apprehension of the return to power with the

<sup>e</sup> Not his brother, nor any near relation ; but this mistake does not affect the argument.

return of property to the families of those they had injured beyond all hope of forgiveness.

These Roman confiscators, who were yet only in the elements of tyranny, and were not instructed in the rights of men to exercise all sorts of cruelties on each other without provocation, thought it necessary to spread a sort of colour over their injustice. They considered the vanquished party as composed of traitors who had borne arms, or otherwise had acted with hostility against the commonwealth. They regarded them as persons who had forfeited their property 10 by their crimes. With you, in your improved state of the human mind, there was no such formality. You seized upon five millions sterling of annual rent, and turned forty or fifty thousand human creatures out of their houses, because 'such was your pleasure.' The tyrant, Harry the Eighth of England, as he was not better enlightened than the Roman Marius's and Sylla's, and had not studied in your new schools, did not know what an effectual instrument of despotism was to be found in that grand magazine of offensive weapons, the rights of men. When he resolved to rob the 20 abbey, as the club of the Jacobins have robbed all the ecclesiastics; he began by setting on foot a commission to examine into the crimes and abuses which prevailed in those communities. As it might be expected, his commission reported truths, exaggerations, and falsehoods. But, truly or falsely, it reported abuses and offences. However, as abuses might be corrected, as every crime of persons does not infer a forfeiture with regard to communities, and as property, in that dark age, was not discovered to be a creature of prejudice, all those abuses (and there were enough of them) were 30 hardly thought sufficient ground for such a confiscation as it was for his purposes to make. He therefore procured the formal surrender of these estates. All these operose proceedings were adopted by one of the most decided tyrants in the rolls of history, as necessary preliminaries, before he could venture, by bribing the members of his two servile

houses with a share of the spoil, and holding out to them an eternal immunity from taxation, to demand a confirmation of his iniquitous proceedings by an act of parliament. Had fate reserved him to our times, four technical terms would have done his business, and saved him all this trouble; he needed nothing more than one short form of incantation—*‘Philosophy, Light, Liberty, the Rights of Men.’*

I can say nothing in praise of those acts of tyranny, which no voice has hitherto ever commended under any of their  
 10 false colours; yet in these false colours an homage was paid by despotism to justice. The power which was above all fear and all remorse was not set above all shame. Whilst Shame keeps its watch, Virtue is not wholly extinguished in the heart; nor will Moderation be utterly exiled from the minds of tyrants.

I believe every honest man sympathizes in his reflections with our political poet on that occasion, and will pray to avert the omen whenever these acts of rapacious despotism present themselves to his view or his imagination:

20

—— — ‘May no such storm

Fall on our times, where ruin must reform.

Tell me (my muse) what monstrous, dire offence,

What crimes could any Christian king incense

To such a rage? Was’t luxury or lust?

Was *he* so temperate, so chaste, so just?

Were these their crimes? they were his own much more;

But wealth is crime enough to him that’s poor.\*

\* The rest of the passage is this—

‘Who having spent the treasures of his crown,

Condemns their luxury to feed his own.

And yet this act, to varnish o’er the shame

Of sacrilege, must bear Devotion’s name.

No crime so bold, but would be understood

A real, or at least a seeming good;

Who fears not to do ill, yet fears the name;

And, free from conscience, is a slave to fame.

Thus he the church at once protects, and spoils:

But princes’ swords are sharper than their styles.

And thus to th’ ages past he makes amends,

This same wealth, which is at all times treason and *lese nation* to indigent and rapacious despotism, under all modes of polity, was your temptation to violate property, law, and religion, united in one object. But was the state of France so wretched and undone, that no other resource but rapine remained to preserve its existence? On this point I wish to receive some information. When the states met, was the condition of the finances of France such, that, after economising on principles of justice and mercy through all departments, no fair repartition of burthens upon all the orders 10 could possibly restore them? If such an equal imposition would have been sufficient, you well know it might easily have been made. Mr. Necker, in the budget which he laid before the Orders assembled at Versailles, made a detailed exposition of the state of the French nation.\*

If we give credit to him, it was not necessary to have recourse to any new impositions whatsoever, to put the

Their charity destroys, their faith defends.  
Then did Religion in a lazy cell,  
In empty aery contemplations dwell;  
And, like the block, unmoved lay: but ours,  
As much too active, like the stork devours.  
Is there no temperate region can be known,  
Betwixt their frigid, and our torrid zone?  
Could we not wake from that lethargic dream,  
But to be restless in a worse extreme?  
And for that lethargy was there no cure,  
But to be cast into a calenture?  
Can knowledge have no bound, but must advance  
So far, to make us wish for ignorance?  
And rather in the dark to grope our way,  
Than, led by a false guide, to err by day?  
Who sees these dismal heaps, but would demand,  
What barbarous invader sack'd the land?  
But when he hears, no Goth, no Turk did bring  
This desolation, but a Christian king;  
When nothing, but the name of zeal, appears  
Twixt our best actions, and the worst of theirs,  
What does he think our sacrilege would spare,  
When such th' effects of our devotion are?'

COOPER'S HILL, by SIR JOHN DENHAM.

\* Rapport de Mons. le Directeur-général des finances, fait par ordre du Roi à Versailles. Mai 5, 1789.

receipts of France on a balance with its expenses. He stated the permanent charges of all descriptions, including the interest of a new loan of four hundred millions, at 531,444,000 livres ; the fixed revenue at 475,294,000, making the deficiency 56,150,000, or short of 2,200,000 sterling. But to balance it, he brought forward savings and improvements of revenue (considered as entirely certain) to rather more than the amount of that deficiency ; and he concludes with these emphatical words (p. 39) ‘*Quel pays, Messieurs, 10 que celui, ou, sans impôts et avec de simples objets inaperçus, on peut faire disparaître un déficit qui a fait tant de bruit en Europe ?*’ [What country, gentlemen, is there but this in which, without taxation, and by simple and imperceptible means, it is possible to get rid of a deficit which has made so much noise in Europe ?] As to the reimbursement, the sinking of debt, and the other great objects of public credit and political arrangement indicated in Mons. Necker’s speech, no doubt could be entertained, but that a very moderate and proportioned assessment on the citizens without distinction would 20 have provided for all of them to the fullest extent of their demand.

If this representation of Mons. Necker was false, then the assembly are in the highest degree culpable for having forced the king to accept as his minister, and since the king’s deposition, for having employed as *their* minister, a man who had been capable of abusing so notoriously the confidence of his master and their own ; in a matter too of the highest moment, and directly appertaining to his particular office. But if the representation was exact (as, having always, along 30 with you, conceived a high degree of respect for Mr. Necker, I make no doubt it was) then what can be said in favour of those, who, instead of moderate, reasonable, and general contribution, have in cold blood, and impelled by no necessity, had recourse to a partial and cruel confiscation ?

Was that contribution refused on a pretext of privilege, either on the part of the clergy or on that of the nobility ?



No certainly. As to the clergy, they even ran before the wishes of the third order. Previous to the meeting of the states, they had in all their instructions expressly directed their deputies to renounce every immunity, which put them upon a footing distinct from the condition of their fellow-subjects. In this renunciation the clergy were even more explicit than the nobility.

But let us suppose that the deficiency had remained at the 56 millions, (or £2,200,000 sterling) as at first stated by Mr. Necker. Let us allow that all the resources he opposed to 10 that deficiency were impudent and groundless fictions ; and that the assembly (or their lords of articles \* at the Jacobins) were from thence justified in laying the whole burthen of that deficiency on the clergy,—yet allowing all this, a necessity of £2,200,000 sterling will not support a confiscation to the amount of five millions. The imposition of £2,200,000 on the clergy, as partial, would have been oppressive and unjust, but it would not have been altogether ruinous to those on whom it was imposed ; and therefore it would not have answered the real purpose of the managers. 20

Perhaps persons, unacquainted with the state of France, on hearing the clergy and the noblesse were privileged in point of taxation, may be led to imagine, that previous to the revolution these bodies had contributed nothing to the state. This is a great mistake. They certainly did not contribute equally with each other, nor either of them equally with the commons. They both however contributed largely. Neither nobility nor clergy enjoyed any exemption from the excise on consumable commodities, from duties of custom, or from any of the other numerous *indirect* impositions, which 30 in France as well as here, make so very large a proportion of all payments to the public. The noblesse paid the capitation. They paid also a land-tax, called the twentieth penny,

\* In the constitution of Scotland during the Stuart reigns, a committee sat for preparing bills ; and none could pass but those previously approved by them. This committee was called lords of articles.

to the height sometimes of three, sometimes of four shillings in the pound ; both of them *direct* impositions of no light nature, and no trivial produce. The clergy of the provinces annexed by conquest to France, which in extent make about an eighth part of the whole, but in wealth a much larger proportion, paid likewise to the capitation and the twentieth penny, at the rate paid by the nobility. The clergy in the old provinces did not pay the capitation ; but they had redeemed themselves at the expense of about 24 millions, or a  
10 little more than a million sterling. They were exempted from the twentieths ; but then they made free gifts ; they contracted debts for the state ; and they were subject to some other charges, the whole computed at about a thirteenth part of their clear income. They ought to have paid annually about forty thousand pounds more, to put them on a par with the contribution of the nobility.

When the terrors of this tremendous proscription hung over the clergy, they made an offer of a contribution, through the archbishop of Aix, which, for its extravagance, ought  
20 not to have been accepted. But it was evidently and obviously more advantageous to the public creditor, than anything which could rationally be promised by the confiscation. Why was it not accepted ? The reason is plain—There was no desire that the church should be brought to serve the state. The service of the state was made a pretext to destroy the church. In their way to the destruction of the church they would not scruple to destroy their country : and they have destroyed it. One great end in the project  
30 would have been defeated, if the plan of extortion had been adopted in lieu of the scheme of confiscation. The new landed interest connected with the new republic, and connected with it for its very being, could not have been created. This was among the reasons why that extravagant ransom was not accepted.

The madness of the project of confiscation, on the plan that was first pretended, soon became apparent. To bring

this unwieldy mass of landed property, enlarged by the confiscation of all the vast landed domain of the crown, at once into market, was obviously to defeat the profits proposed by the confiscation, by depreciating the value of those lands, and indeed of all the landed estates throughout France. Such a sudden diversion of all its circulating money from trade to land, must be an additional mischief. What step was taken? Did the assembly, on becoming sensible of the inevitable ill effects of their projected sale, revert to the offers of the clergy? No distress could oblige them to travel in a 10 course which was disgraced by any appearance of justice. Giving over all hopes from a general immediate sale, another project seems to have succeeded. They proposed to take stock in exchange for the church lands. In that project great difficulties arose in equalizing the objects to be exchanged. Other obstacles also presented themselves, which threw them back again upon some project of sale. The municipalities had taken an alarm. They would not hear of transferring the whole plunder of the kingdom to the stockholders in Paris. Many of those municipalities had been 20 upon system reduced to the most deplorable indigence. Money was nowhere to be seen. They were therefore led to the point that was so ardently desired. They panted for a currency of any kind which might revive their perishing industry. The municipalities were then to be admitted to a share in the spoil, which evidently rendered the first scheme, if ever it had been seriously entertained, altogether impracticable. Public exigencies pressed upon all sides. The minister of finance reiterated his call for supply with a most urgent, anxious, and boding voice. Thus pressed on all 30 sides, instead of the first plan of converting their bankers into bishops and abbots, instead of paying the old debt, they contracted a new debt, at 3 per cent., creating a new paper currency, founded on an eventual sale of the church lands. They issued this paper currency to satisfy in the first instance chiefly the demands made upon them by the *Bank of*

*discount*, the great machine, or paper-mill, of their fictitious wealth.

The spoil of the church was now become the only resource of all their operations in finance ; the vital principle of all their politics ; the sole security for the existence of their power. It was necessary by all, even the most violent means, to put every individual on the same bottom, and to bind the nation in one guilty interest to uphold this act, and the authority of those by whom it was done. In order to force  
10 the most reluctant into a participation of their pillage, they rendered their paper circulation compulsory in all payments. Those who consider the general tendency of their schemes to this one object as a centre ; and a centre from which afterwards all their measures radiate, will not think that I dwell too long upon this part of the proceedings of the national assembly.

To cut off all appearance of connection between the crown and public justice, and to bring the whole under implicit obedience to the dictators in Paris, the old independent judi-  
20 cature of the parliaments, with all its merits, and all its faults, was wholly abolished. Whilst the parliaments existed, it was evident that the people might some time or other come to resort to them, and rally under the standard of their ancient laws. It became however a matter of consideration that the magistrates and officers, in the courts now abolished, *had purchased their places* at a very high rate, for which, as well as for the duty they performed, they received but a very low return of interest. Simple confiscation is a boon only for the clergy ; to the lawyers some appearances of equity are to be  
30 observed ; and they are to receive compensation to an immense amount. Their compensation becomes part of the national debt, for the liquidation of which there is the one exhaustless fund. The lawyers are to obtain their compensation in the new church paper, which is to march with the new principles of judicature and legislature. The dismissed magistrates are to take their share of martyrdom with the ecclesiastics, or to

receive their own property from such a fund and in such a manner, as all those, who have been seasoned with the ancient principles of jurisprudence, and had been the sworn guardians of property, must look upon with horror. Even the clergy are to receive their miserable allowance out of the depreciated paper, which is stamped with the indelible character of sacrilege, and with the symbols of their own ruin, or they must starve. So violent an outrage upon credit, property, and liberty, as this compulsory paper currency, has seldom been exhibited by the alliance of bankruptcy and tyranny, at any 10 time, or in any nation.

In the course of all these operations, at length comes out the grand *arcanum* [*secret*];—that in reality, and in a fair sense, the lands of the church, so far as anything certain can be gathered from their proceedings, are not to be sold at all. By the late resolutions of the national assembly, they are indeed to be delivered to the highest bidder. But it is to be observed, that *a certain portion only of the purchase money is to be laid down*. A period of twelve years is to be given for the payment of the rest. The philosophic purchasers are 20 therefore, on payment of a sort of fine, to be put instantly into possession of the estate. It becomes in some respects a sort of gift to them; to be held on the feudal tenure of zeal to the new establishment. This project is evidently to let in a body of purchasers without money. The consequence will be, that these purchasers, or rather grantees, will pay, not only from the rents as they accrue, which might as well be received by the state, but from the spoil of the materials of buildings, from waste in woods, and from whatever money, by hands habituated to the gripings of usury, they can wring 30 from the miserable peasant. He is to be delivered over to the mercenary and arbitrary discretion of men, who will be stimulated to every species of extortion by the growing demands on the growing profits of an estate held under the precarious settlement of a new political system.

WHEN all the frauds, impostures, violences, rapines, burnings, murders, confiscations, compulsory paper currencies, and every description of tyranny and cruelty employed to bring about and to uphold this revolution, have their natural effect, that is, to shock the moral sentiments of all virtuous and sober minds, the abettors of this philosophic system immediately strain their throats in a declamation against the old monarchical government of France. When they have rendered that  
10 deposed power sufficiently black, they then proceed in argument, as if all those who disapprove of their new abuses, must of course be partisans of the old ; that those who reprobate their crude and violent schemes of liberty ought to be treated as advocates for servitude. I admit that their necessities do compel them to this base and contemptible fraud. Nothing can reconcile men to their proceedings and projects but the supposition that there is no third option between them, and some tyranny as odious as can be furnished by the records of history, or by the invention of poets. This prattling of theirs  
20 hardly deserves the name of sophistry. It is nothing but plain impudence. Have those gentlemen never heard, in the whole circle of the worlds of theory and practice, of any thing between the despotism of the monarch and the despotism of the multitude ? Have they never heard of a monarchy directed by laws, controlled and balanced by the great hereditary wealth and hereditary dignity of a nation ; and both again controlled by a judicious check from the reason and feeling of the people at large acting by a suitable and permanent organ ? Is it then impossible that a man may be  
30 found who, without criminal ill intention, or pitiable absurdity, shall prefer such a mixed and tempered government to either of the extremes ; and who may repute that nation to be destitute of all wisdom and of all virtue, which, having in its choice to obtain such a government with ease, or rather to confirm it when actually possessed, thought proper to commit a thousand crimes, and to subject their country to a thousand evils, in order to avoid it ? Is it then a truth so

universally acknowledged, that a pure democracy is the only tolerable form into which human society can be thrown, that a man is not permitted to hesitate about its merits, without the suspicion of being a friend to tyranny, that is, of being a foe to mankind?

I do not know under what description to class the present ruling authority in France. It affects to be a pure democracy, though I think it in a direct train of becoming shortly a mischievous and ignoble oligarchy. But for the present I admit it to be a contrivance of the nature and effect of what it pre- 10 tends to. I reprobate no form of government merely upon abstract principles. There may be situations in which the purely democratic form will become necessary. There may be some (very few, and very particularly circumstanced) where it would be clearly desirable. This I do not take to be the case of France, or of any other great country. Until now, we have seen no examples of considerable democracies. The ancients were better acquainted with them. Not being wholly unread in the authors, who had seen the most of those constitutions, and who best understood them, I cannot help 20 concurring with their opinion, that an absolute democracy, no more than absolute monarchy, is to be reckoned among the legitimate forms of government. They think it rather the corruption and degeneracy, than the sound constitution of a republic: If I recollect rightly, Aristotle observes, that a democracy has many striking points of resemblance with a tyranny.\* Of this I am certain, that in a democracy, the

\* When I wrote this I quoted from memory, after many years had elapsed from my reading the passage. A learned friend has found it, and it is as follows:

Τὸ ἥθος τὸ αὐτὸ, καὶ ἀμφω δεσποτικά τῶν βελτινῶν, καὶ τὰ ψηφίσματα, ὥσπερ ἐκεῖ τὰ ἐπιτάγματα· καὶ ὁ δημαγωγὸς καὶ ὁ κόλαξ, οἱ αὐτοὶ καὶ ἀνάλογον· καὶ μάλιστα ἑκάτεροι παρ' ἑκατέροις ἰσχύουσιν, οἱ μὲν κόλακες παρὰ τυράννοις, οἱ δὲ δημαγωγοὶ παρὰ τοῖς δῆμοις τοῖς τοιοῦτοις.—

'The ethical character is the same; both exercise despotism over the better class of citizens; and decrees are in the one, what ordinances and arrêts are in the other: the demagogue too, and the court favourite are not unfrequently the same identical men, and always bear a close analogy; and these have the principal power, each in their re-

majority of the citizens is capable of exercising the most cruel oppressions upon the minority, whenever strong divisions prevail in that kind of polity, as they often must ; and that oppression of the minority will extend to far greater numbers, and will be carried on with much greater fury, than can almost ever be apprehended from the dominion of a single sceptre. In such a popular persecution, individual sufferers are in a much more deplorable condition than in any other. Under a cruel prince they have the balmy compassion of man-  
 10 kind to assuage the smart of their wounds ; they have the plaudits of the people to animate their generous constancy under their sufferings : but those who are subjected to wrong under multitudes, are deprived of all external consolation. They seem deserted by mankind ; overpowered by a conspiracy of their whole species.

But admitting democracy not to have that inevitable tendency to party tyranny, which I suppose it to have, and admitting it to possess as much good in it when unmixed, as I am sure it possesses when compounded with other forms ;  
 20 does monarchy, on its part, contain nothing at all to recommend it ? I do not often quote Bolingbroke, nor have his works in general left any permanent impression on my mind. He is a presumptuous and a superficial writer. But he has one observation, which, in my opinion, is not without depth and solidity. He says, that he prefers a monarchy to other governments ; because you can better ingraft any description of republic on a monarchy than any thing of monarchy upon the republican forms. I think him perfectly in the right. The fact is so historically ; and it agrees well with the  
 30 speculation.

I know how easy a topic it is to dwell on the faults of departed greatness. By a revolution in the state, the fawning sycophant of yesterday is converted into the austere

spective forms of government, favourites with the absolute monarch, and demagogues with a people such as I have described.' Arist. Politic. lib. iv. cap. 4.



critic of the present hour. But steady independent minds, when they have an object of so serious a concern to mankind as government under their contemplation, will disdain to assume the part of satirists and declaimers. They will judge of human institutions as they do of human characters. They will sort out the good from the evil, which is mixed in mortal institutions as it is in mortal men.

Your government in France, though usually, and I think justly, reputed the best of the unqualified or ill-qualified monarchies, was still full of abuses. These abuses accumulated in a length of time, as they must accumulate in every monarchy not under the constant inspection of a popular representative. I am no stranger to the faults and defects of the subverted government of France; and I think I am not inclined by nature or policy to make a panegyric upon any thing which is a just and natural object of censure. But the question is not now of the vices of that monarchy, but of its existence. Is it then true, that the French government was such as to be incapable or undeserving of reform; so that it was of absolute necessity the whole fabric should be at once 10 pulled down, and the area cleared for the erection of a theoretic experimental edifice in its place? All France was of a different opinion in the beginning of the year 1789. The instructions to the representatives to the states-general, from every district in that kingdom, were filled with projects for the reformation of that government, without the remotest suggestion of a design to destroy it. Had such a design been then even insinuated, I believe there would have been but one voice, and that voice for rejecting it with scorn and horror. Men have been sometimes led by degrees, some- 20 times hurried into things, of which, if they could have seen the whole together, they never would have permitted the most remote approach. When those instructions were given, there was no question but that abuses existed, and that they demanded a reform; nor is there now. In the interval between the instructions and the revolution, things changed 30

their shape; and in consequence of that change, the true question at present is, Whether those who would have reformed, or those who have destroyed, are in the right?

To hear some men speak of the late monarchy of France, you would imagine that they were talking of Persia bleeding under the ferocious sword of Tæhmas Kouli Khân; or at least describing the barbarous anarchic despotism of Turkey, where the finest countries in the most genial climates in the world are wasted by peace more than any countries have  
10 been worried by war; where arts are unknown, where manufactures languish, where science is extinguished, where agriculture decays, where the human race itself melts away and perishes under the eye of the observer. Was this the case of France? I have no way of determining the question but by a reference to facts. Facts do not support this resemblance. Along with much evil, there is some good in monarchy itself; and some corrective to its evil, from religion, from laws, from manners, from opinions, the French monarchy must have received; which rendered it (though by  
20 no means a free, and therefore by no means a good constitution) a despotism rather in appearance than in reality.

Among the standards upon which the effects of government on any country are to be estimated, I must consider the state of its population as not the least certain. No country in which population flourishes, and is in progressive improvement, can be under a *very* mischievous government. About sixty years ago, the Intendants of the generalities of France made, with other matters, a report of the population of their several districts. I have not the books, which are  
30 very voluminous, by me, nor do I know where to procure them (I am obliged to speak by memory, and therefore the less positively) but I think the population of France was by them, even at that period, estimated at twenty-two millions of souls. At the end of the last century it had been generally calculated at eighteen. On either of these estimations France was not ill-peopled. Mr. Necker, who is an authority

for his own time at least equal to the Intendants for theirs, reckons, and upon apparently sure principles, the people of France, in the year 1780, at twenty-four millions six hundred and seventy thousand. But was this the probable ultimate term under the old establishment? Dr. Price is of opinion, that the growth of population in France was by no means at its *acmé* in that year. I certainly defer to Dr. Price's authority a good deal more in these speculations, than I do in his general politics. This gentleman, taking ground on Mr. Necker's data, is very confident, that since the period of 10 that minister's calculation, the French population has increased rapidly; so rapidly that in the year 1789 he will not consent to rate the people of that kingdom at a lower number than thirty millions. After abating much (and much I think ought to be abated) from the sanguine calculation of Dr. Price, I have no doubt that the population of France did increase considerably during this later period: but supposing that it increased to nothing more than will be sufficient to complete the 24,670,000 to 25 millions, still a population of 25 millions, and that in an increasing progress, 20 on a space of about twenty-seven thousand square leagues, is immense. It is, for instance, a good deal more than the proportional population of this island, or even than that of England, the best-peopled part of the united kingdom.

It is not universally true, that France is a fertile country. Considerable tracts of it are barren, and labour under other natural disadvantages. In the portions of that territory, where things are more favourable, as far as I am able to discover, the numbers of the people correspond to the 30 indulgence of nature.\* The Generality of Lisle (this I admit is the strongest example) upon an extent of 40½ leagues, about ten years ago, contained 734, 600 souls, which is 1772 inhabitants to each square league. The middle term

\* De l'Administration des Finances de la France, par Mons. Necker, vol. i. p. 288.

for the rest of France is about 900 inhabitants to the same admeasurement.

I do not attribute this population to the deposed government ; because I do not like to compliment the contrivances of men, with what is due in a great degree to the bounty of Providence. But that decried government could not have obstructed, most probably it favoured, the operation of those causes (whatever they were) whether of nature in the soil, or habits of industry among the people, which has produced  
 10 so large a number of the species throughout that whole kingdom, and exhibited in some particular places such prodigies of population. I never will suppose that fabric of a state to be the worst of all political institutions, which, by experience, is found to contain a principle favourable (however latent it may be) to the increase of mankind.

The wealth of a country is another, and no contemptible standard, by which we may judge whether, on the whole, a government be protecting or destructive. France far exceeds England in the multitude of her people ; but I apprehend that her comparative wealth is much inferior to ours ;  
 20 that it is not so equal in the distribution, nor so ready in the circulation. I believe the difference in the form of the two governments to be amongst the causes of this advantage on the side of England. I speak of England, not of the whole British dominions ; which, if compared with those of France, will, in some degree, weaken the comparative rate of wealth upon our side. But that wealth, which will not endure a comparison with the riches of England, may constitute a very respectable degree of opulence. Mr.  
 30 Necker's book published in 1785,\* contains an accurate and interesting collection of facts relative to public economy and to political arithmetic ; and his speculations on the subject are in general wise and liberal. In that work he gives an idea of the state of France, very remote from the portrait of a country whose government was a perfect

\* De l'Administration des Finances de la France, par M. Necker.

grievance, an absolute evil, admitting no cure but through the violent and uncertain remedy of a total revolution. He affirms, that from the year 1726 to the year 1784, there was coined at the mint of France, in the species of gold and silver, to the amount of about one hundred millions of pounds sterling.\*

It is impossible that Mr. Necker should be mistaken in the amount of the bullion which has been coined in the mint. It is a matter of official record. The reasonings of this able financier, concerning the quantity of gold and silver which 10 remained for circulation, when he wrote in 1785, that is about four years before the deposition and imprisonment of the French King, are not of equal certainty; but they are laid on grounds so apparently solid, that it is not easy to refuse a considerable degree of assent to his calculation. He calculates the *numéraire*, or what we call *specie*, then actually existing in France, at about eighty-eight millions of the same English money. A great accumulation of wealth for one country, large as that country is! Mr. Necker was so far from considering this influx of wealth as likely to cease, 20 when he wrote in 1785, that he presumes upon a future annual increase of two per cent. upon the money brought into France during the periods from which he computed.

Some adequate cause must have originally introduced all the money coined at its mint into that kingdom; and some cause as operative must have kept at home, or returned into its bosom, such a vast flood of treasure as Mr. Necker calculates to remain for domestic circulation. Suppose any reasonable deductions from Mr. Necker's computation; the remainder must still amount to an immense sum. Causes 30 thus powerful to acquire and to retain, cannot be found in discouraged industry, insecure property, and a positively destructive government. Indeed, when I consider the face of the kingdom of France; the multitude and opulence of her cities; the useful magnificence of her spacious high

\* Vol. iii. chap. 8 and chap. 9.

roads and bridges ; the opportunity of her artificial canals and navigations opening the conveniences of maritime communication through a solid continent of so immense an extent ; when I turn my eyes to the stupendous works of her ports and harbours, and to her whole naval apparatus, whether for war or trade ; when I bring before my view the number of her fortifications, constructed with so bold and masterly a skill, and made and maintained at so prodigious a charge, presenting an armed front and impenetrable barrier  
 10 to her enemies upon every side ; when I recollect how very small a part of that extensive region is without cultivation, and to what complete perfection the culture of many of the best productions of the earth have been brought in France ; when I reflect on the excellence of her manufactures and fabrics, second to none but ours, and in some particulars not second ; when I contemplate the grand foundations of charity, public and private : when I survey the state of all the arts that beautify and polish life ; when I reckon the men she has bred for extending her fame in war, her able statesmen,  
 20 the multitude of her profound lawyers and theologians, her philosophers, her critics, her historians and antiquaries, her poets, and her orators sacred and profane, I behold in all this something which awes and commands the imagination, which checks the mind on the brink of precipitate and indiscriminate censure, and which demands, that we should very seriously examine, what and how great are the latent vices that could authorise us at once to level so spacious a fabric with the ground. I do not recognize, in this view of things, the despotism of Turkey. Nor do I discern the character of  
 30 a government, that has been, on the whole, so oppressive, or so corrupt, or so negligent, as to be utterly unfit *for all reformation*. I must think such a government well deserved to have its excellencies heightened ; its faults corrected ; and its capacities improved into a British constitution.

Whoever has examined into the proceedings of that deposed government for several years back, cannot fail to have

observed, amidst the inconstancy and fluctuation natural to courts, an earnest endeavour towards the prosperity and improvement of the country ; he must admit, that it had long been employed, in some instances, wholly to remove, in many considerably to correct, the abusive practices and usages that had prevailed in the state ; and that even the unlimited power of the sovereign over the persons of his subjects, inconsistent, as undoubtedly it was, with law and liberty, had yet been every day growing more mitigated in the exercise. So far from refusing itself to reformation, that 10 government was open, with a censurable degree of facility, to all sorts of projects and projectors on the subject. Rather too much countenance was given to the spirit of innovation, which soon was turned against those who fostered it, and ended in their ruin. It is but cold, and no very flattering justice to that fallen monarchy, to say, that, for many years, it trespassed more by levity and want of judgment in several of its schemes, than from any defect in diligence or in public spirit. To compare the government of France for the last fifteen or sixteen years with wise and well-constituted 20 establishments, during that, or during any period, is not to act with fairness. But if in point of prodigality in the expenditure of money, or in point of rigour in the exercise of power, it be compared with any of the former reigns, I believe candid judges will give little credit to the good intentions of those who dwell perpetually on the donations to favourites, or on the expenses of the court, or on the horrors of the Bastile in the reign of Louis the XVIth.\*

Whether the system, if it deserves such a name, now built on the ruins of that ancient monarchy, will be able to give a 30 better account of the population and wealth of the country, which it has taken under its care, is a matter very doubtful.

\* The world is obliged to M. de Calonne for the pains he has taken to refute the scandalous exaggerations relative to some of the royal expenses, and to detect the fallacious account given of pensions, for the wicked purpose of provoking the populace to all sorts of crimes.

Instead of improving by the change, I apprehend that a long series of years must be told before it can recover in any degree the effects of this philosophic revolution, and before the nation can be replaced on its former footing. If Dr. Price should think fit, a few years hence, to favour us with an estimate of the population of France, he will hardly be able to make up his tale of thirty millions of souls, as computed in 1789, or the assembly's computation of twenty-six millions of that year; or even Mr. Necker's twenty-five millions in 1780.

- 10 I hear that there are considerable emigrations from France; and that many, quitting that voluptuous climate, and that seductive *Circean* liberty, have taken refuge in the frozen regions, and under the British despotism, of Canada.

In the present disappearance of coin, no person could think it the same country, in which the present minister of the finances has been able to discover fourscore millions sterling in specie. From its general aspect one would conclude that it had been for some time past under the special direction of the learned academicians of Laputa and

- 20 Balnibarbi.\* Already the population of Paris has so declined, that Mr. Necker stated to the national assembly the provision to be made for its subsistence at a fifth less than what had formerly been found requisite.† It is said (and I have never heard it contradicted) that an hundred thousand people are out of employment in that city, though it is become the seat of the imprisoned court and national assembly. Nothing, I am credibly informed, can exceed the shocking and disgusting spectacle of mendicancy displayed in that capital. Indeed, the votes of the national assembly leave no doubt of  
30 the fact. They have lately appointed a standing committee of mendicancy. They are contriving at once a vigorous police on this subject, and, for the first time, the imposition

\* See Gulliver's Travels for the idea of countries governed by philosophers.

† M. de Calonne states the falling off of the population of Paris as far more considerable; and it may be so, since the period of Mr. Necker's calculation.



of a tax to maintain the poor, for whose present relief great sums appear on the face of the public accounts of the year.\* In the mean time, the leaders of the legislative clubs and coffee-houses are intoxicated with admiration at their own wisdom and ability. They speak with the most sovereign contempt of the rest of the world. They tell the people, to comfort them in the rags with which they have clothed them, that they are a nation of philosophers; and, sometimes, by all the arts of quackish parade, by shew, tumult, and bustle, sometimes by the alarms of plots and invasions, 10 they attempt to drown the cries of indigence, and to divert the eyes of the observer from the ruin and wretchedness of

* Travaux de charité pour subvenir au manque de travail à Paris et dans les provinces [Relief works to supply the want of employment in Paris and the provinces] . . .	Liv.	£	s.	d.
Destruction de vagabondage et de la mendicité [For getting rid of vagrancy and mendicity] . . .	3,866,920	Sts	161,121	13 4
Primes pour l'importation de grains [Bounties on importation of grain]	1,671,417	. .	69,642	7 6
Depenses relatives aux subsistances, deduction fait des recouvrements qui ont eu lieu [Expenses connec- ted with grants-in-aid, making allowance for recoveries that have been made] . . . . .	5,671,907	. .	236,329	9 2
	39,871,790	. .	1,661,324	11 8
Total . . Liv.	51,082,034	Sts	2,128,418	1 8

When I sent this book to the press I entertained some doubt concerning the nature and extent of the last article in the above accounts, which is only under a general head, without any detail. Since then I have seen M. de Calonne's work. I must think it a great loss to me that I had not that advantage earlier. M. de Calonne thinks this article to be on account of general subsistence: but as he is not able to comprehend how so great a loss as upwards of £1,661,000 sterling could be sustained on the difference between the price and the sale of grain, he seems to attribute the enormous head of charge to secret expenses of the revolution. I cannot say any thing positively on that subject. The reader is capable of judging, by the aggregate of these immense charges, on the state and condition of France; and the system of public economy adopted in that nation. These articles of account produced no enquiry or discussion in the National Assembly.

the state. A brave people will certainly prefer liberty, accompanied with a virtuous poverty, to a depraved and wealthy servitude. But before the price of comfort and opulence is paid, one ought to be pretty sure it is real liberty which is purchased, and that she is to be purchased at no other price. I shall always, however, consider that liberty as very equivocal in her appearance, which has not wisdom and justice for her companions; and does not lead prosperity and plenty in her train.

- 10 THE advocates for this revolution, not satisfied with exaggerating the vices of their ancient government, strike at the fame of their country itself, by painting almost all that could have attracted the attention of strangers, I mean their nobility and their clergy, as objects of horror. If this were only a libel, there had not been much in it. But it has practical consequences. Had your nobility and gentry, who formed the great body of your landed men, and the whole of your military officers, resembled those of Germany, at the period when the Hanse-towns were necessitated to confederate
- 20 against the nobles in defence of their property—had they been like the *Orsini* and *Vitelli* in Italy, who used to sally from their fortified dens to rob the trader and traveller—had they been such as the *Mamalukes* in Egypt, or the *Nayres* on the coast of Malabar, I do admit, that too critical an enquiry might not be advisable into the means of freeing the world from such a nuisance. The statues of Equity and Mercy might be veiled for a moment. The tenderest minds, confounded with the dreadful exigence in which morality submits to the suspension of its own rules in favour of its own
- 30 principles, might turn aside whilst fraud and violence were accomplishing the destruction of a pretended nobility which disgraced whilst it persecuted human nature. The persons most abhorrent from blood, and treason, and arbitrary confiscation, might remain silent spectators of this civil war between the vices.

But did the privileged nobility who met under the king's precept at Versailles, in 1789, or their constituents, deserve to be looked on as the *Nayres* or *Mamaluks* of this age, or as the *Orcini* and *Vitelli* of ancient times? If I had then asked the question, I should have passed for a madman. What have they since done that they were to be driven into exile, that their persons should be hunted about, mangled, and tortured, their families dispersed, their houses laid in ashes, that their order should be abolished, and the memory of it, if possible, extinguished, by ordaining them to change the very names by 10 which they were usually known? Read their instructions to their representatives. They breathe the spirit of liberty as warmly, and they recommend reformation as strongly, as any other order. Their privileges relative to contribution were voluntarily surrendered; as the king, from the beginning, surrendered all pretence to a right of taxation. Upon a free constitution there was but one opinion in France. The absolute monarchy was at an end. It breathed its last, without a groan, without struggle, without convulsion. All the struggle, all the dissension arose afterwards upon the preference of a despotic democracy to a government of reciprocal control. The triumph of the victorious party was over the principles of a British constitution.

I have observed the affectation, which, for many years past, has prevailed in Paris even to a degree perfectly childish, of idolizing the memory of your Henry the Fourth. If any thing could put one out of humour with that ornament to the kingly character, it would be this overdone style of insidious panegyric. The persons who have worked this engine the most busily, are those who have ended their panegyrics in 30 dethroning his successor and descendant; a man, as good-natured at the least, as Henry the Fourth; altogether as fond of his people; and who has done infinitely more to correct the ancient vices of the state than that great monarch did, or we are sure he ever meant to do. Well it is for his panegyrists that they have not him to deal with. For Henry of Navarre

was a resolute, active, and politic prince. He possessed indeed great humanity and mildness; but an humanity and mildness that never stood in the way of his interests. He never sought to be loved without putting himself first in a condition to be feared. He used soft language with determined conduct. He asserted and maintained his authority in the gross, and distributed his acts of concession only in the detail. He spent the income of his prerogative nobly; but he took care not to break in upon the capital; never abandoning for a moment any of the claims, which he made under the fundamental laws, nor sparing to shed the blood of those who opposed him, often in the field, sometimes upon the scaffold. Because he knew how to make his virtues respected by the ungrateful, he has merited the praises of those whom, if they had lived in his time, he would have shut up in the Bastile, and brought to punishment along with the regicides whom he hanged after he had famished Paris into a surrender.

If these panegyrists are in earnest in their admiration of Henry the Fourth, they must remember, that they cannot think more highly of him, than he did of the noblesse of France; whose virtue, honour, courage, patriotism, and loyalty were his constant theme.

But the nobility of France are degenerated since the days of Henry the Fourth.—This is possible. But it is more than I can believe to be true in any great degree. I do not pretend to know France as correctly as some others; but I have endeavoured through my whole life to make myself acquainted with human nature: otherwise I should be unfit to take even my humble part in the service of mankind. In that study I could not pass by a vast portion of our nature, as it appeared modified in a country but twenty-four miles from the shore of this island. On my best observation, compared with my best enquiries, I found your nobility for the greater part composed of men of an high spirit, and of a delicate sense of honour, both with regard to themselves individually, and with regard to their whole corps, over whom they kept, be-

yond what is common in other countries, a censorial eye. They were tolerably well bred ; very officious, humane, and hospitable ; in their conversation frank and open ; with a good military tone ; and reasonably tinctured with literature, particularly of the authors in their own language. Many had pretensions far above this description. I speak of those who were generally met with.

As to their behaviour to the inferior classes, they appeared to me to comport themselves towards them with good-nature, and with something more nearly approaching to familiarity, 10 than is generally practised with us in the intercourse between the higher and lower ranks of life. To strike any person, even in the most abject condition, was a thing in a manner unknown, and would be highly disgraceful. Instances of other ill-treatment of the humble part of the community were rare ; and as to attacks made upon the property or the personal liberty of the commons, I never heard of any whatsoever from *them* ; nor, whilst the laws were in vigour under the ancient government, would such tyranny in subjects have been permitted. As men of landed estates, I had no fault to 20 find with their conduct, though much to reprehend, and much to wish changed, in many of the old tenures. Where the letting of their land was by rent, I could not discover that their agreements with their farmers were oppressive ; nor when they were in partnership with the farmer, as often was the case, have I heard that they had taken the lion's share. The proportions seemed not inequitable. There might be exceptions ; but certainly they were exceptions only. I have no reason to believe that in these respects the landed noblesse of France were worse than the landed gentry of this country ; 30 certainly in no respect more vexatious than the landholders, not noble, of their own nation. In cities the nobility had no manner of power ; in the country very little. You know, Sir, that much of the civil government, and the police in the most essential parts, was not in the hands of that nobility which presents itself first to our consideration. The revenue,

the system and collection of which were the most grievous parts of the French Government, was not administered by the men of the sword ; nor were they answerable for the vices of its principle, or the vexations, where any such existed, in its management.

Denying, as I am well warranted to do, that the nobility had any considerable share in the oppression of the people, in cases in which real oppression existed, I am ready to admit that they were not without considerable faults and errors.

- 10 A foolish imitation of the worst part of the manners of England, which impaired their natural character without substituting in its place what perhaps they meant to copy, has certainly rendered them worse than formerly they were. Habitual dissoluteness of manners continued beyond the pardonable period of life, was more common amongst them than it is with us ; and it reigned with the less hope of remedy, though possibly with something of less mischief, by being covered with more exterior decorum. They countenanced too much that licentious philosophy which has helped to bring on  
20 their ruin. There was another error amongst them more fatal. Those of the commons, who approached to or exceeded many of the nobility in point of wealth, were not fully admitted to the rank and estimation which wealth, in reason and good policy, ought to bestow in every country ; though I think not equally with that of other nobility. The two kinds of aristocracy were too punctiliously kept asunder ; less so, however, than in Germany and some other nations.

- This separation, as I have already taken the liberty of suggesting to you, I conceive to be one principal cause of  
30 the destruction of the old nobility. The military, particularly, was too exclusively reserved for men of family. But after all, this was an error of opinion, which a conflicting opinion would have rectified. A permanent assembly, in which the commons had their share of power, would soon abolish whatever was too invidious and insulting in these distinctions ; and even the faults in the morals of the nobility would have

been probably corrected by the greater varieties of occupation and pursuit to which a constitution by orders would have given rise.●

All this violent cry against the nobility I take to be a mere work of art. To be honoured and even privileged by the laws, opinions, and inveterate usages of our country, growing out of the prejudice of ages, has nothing to provoke horror and indignation, in any man. Even to be too tenacious of those privileges, is not absolutely a crime. The strong struggle in every individual to preserve possession of what he has found to belong to him and to distinguish him, is one of the securities against injustice and despotism implanted in our nature. It operates as an instinct to secure property, and to preserve communities in a settled state. What is there to shock in this? Nobility is a graceful ornament to the civil order. It is the Corinthian capital of polished society. *Omnes boni nobilitati semper favemus* [all among us who are good men always support nobility], was the saying of a wise and good man. It is indeed one sign of a liberal and benevolent mind to incline 20 to it with some sort of partial propensity. He feels no ennobling principle in his own heart who wishes to level all the artificial institutions which have been adopted for giving a body to opinion, and permanence to fugitive esteem. It is a sour, malignant, envious disposition, without taste for the reality, or for any image or representation of virtue, that sees with joy the unmerited fall of what had long flourished in splendour and in honour. I do not like to see any thing destroyed; any void produced in society; any ruin on the face of the land. It was therefore with no disappointment 30 or dissatisfaction that my enquiries and observation did not present to me any incorrigible vices in the noblesse of France, or any abuse which could not be removed by a reform very short of abolition. Your noblesse did not deserve punishment; but to degrade is to punish.

It was with the same satisfaction I found that the result of my enquiry concerning your clergy was not dissimilar. It is no soothing news to my ears, that great bodies of men are incurably corrupt. It is not with much credulity I listen to any, when they speak evil of those whom they are going to plunder. I rather suspect that vices are feigned or exaggerated, when profit is looked for in their punishment. An enemy is a bad witness : a robber is a worse. Vices and abuses there were undoubtedly in that order, and must  
10 be. It was an old establishment, and not frequently revised. But I saw no crimes in the individuals that merited confiscation of their substance, nor those cruel insults and degradations, and that unnatural persecution which has been substituted in the place of meliorating regulation.

If there had been any just cause for this new religious persecution, the atheistic libellers, who act as trumpeters to animate the populace to plunder, do not love any body so much as not to dwell with complacency on the vices of the  
20 existing clergy. This they have not done. They find themselves obliged to rake into the histories of former ages (which they have ransacked with a malignant and profligate industry) for every instance of oppression and persecution which has been made by that body or in its favour, in order to justify, upon very iniquitous, because very illogical principles of retaliation, their own persecutions, and their own cruelties. After destroying all other genealogies and family distinctions, they invent a sort of pedigree of crimes. It is not very just to chastise men for the offences of their  
30 natural ancestors ; but to take the fiction of ancestry in a corporate succession, as a ground for punishing men who have no relation to guilty acts, except in names and general descriptions, is a sort of refinement in injustice belonging to the philosophy of this enlightened age. The assembly punishes men, many, if not most, of whom abhor the violent conduct of ecclesiastics in former times as much as their pre-



sent persecutors can do, and who would be as loud and as strong in the expression of that sense, if they were not well aware of the purposes for which all this declamation is employed.

Corporate bodies are immortal for the good of the members, but not for their punishment. Nations themselves are such corporations. As well might we in England think of waging inexpiable war upon all Frenchmen for the evils which they have brought upon us in the several periods of our mutual hostilities. You might, on your part, think 10 yourselves justified in falling upon all Englishmen on account of the unparalleled calamities brought upon the people of France by the unjust invasions of our Henries and our Edwards. Indeed we should be mutually justified in this exterminatory war upon each other, full as much as you are in the unprovoked persecution of your present countrymen, on account of the conduct of men of the same name in other times.

We do not draw the moral lessons we might from history. On the contrary, without care it may be used to vitiate our 20 minds and to destroy our happiness. In history a great volume is unrolled for our instruction, drawing the materials of future wisdom from the past errors and infirmities of mankind. It may, in the perversion, serve for a magazine, furnishing offensive and defensive weapons for parties in church and state, and supply the means of keeping alive, or reviving dissensions and animosities, and adding fuel to civil fury. History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train 30 of disorderly appetites, which shake the public with the same

——‘troublous storms that toss

The private state, and render life unsweet.’

These vices are the *causes* of those storms. Religion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights of men, are the *pretexts*.

The pretexts are always found in some specious appearance of a real good. You would not secure men from tyranny and sedition, by rooting out of the mind the principles to which these fraudulent pretexts apply! If you did, you would root out every thing that is valuable in the human breast. As these are the pretexts, so the ordinary actors and instruments in great public evils are kings, priests, magistrates, senates, parliaments, national assemblies, judges, and captains. You would not cure the evil by  
10 resolving, that there should be no more monarchs, nor ministers of state, nor of the gospel; no interpreters of law; no general officers; no public councils. You might change the names. The things in some shape must remain. A certain *quantum* [*amount*] of power must always exist in the community, in some hands, and under some appellation. Wise men will apply their remedies to vices, not to names; to the causes of evil which are permanent, not to the occasional organs by which they act, and the transitory modes in which they appear. Otherwise you will be wise historically,  
20 a fool in practice. Seldom have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive. Whilst you are discussing fashion, the fashion is gone by. The very same vice assumes a new body. The spirit transmigrates; and, far from losing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new organs with the fresh vigour of a juvenile activity. It walks abroad; it continues its ravages, whilst you are gibbeting the carcass, or demolishing the tomb. You are terrifying yourself with ghosts and apparitions,  
30 whilst your house is the haunt of robbers. It is thus with all those, who, attending only to the shell and husk of history, think they are waging war with intolerance, pride, and cruelty, whilst, under colour of abhorring the ill principles of antiquated parties, they are authorizing and feeding the same odious vices in different factions, and perhaps in worse.

Your citizens of Paris formerly had lent themselves as the ready instruments to slaughter the followers of Calvin, at the infamous massacre of St. Bartholomew. What should we say to those who could think of retaliating on the Parisians of this day the abominations and horrors of that time? They are indeed brought to abhor *that* massacre. Ferocious as they are, it is not difficult to make them dislike it; because the politicians and fashionable teachers have no interest in giving their passions exactly the same direction. Still however they find it their interest to keep the same savage 10 dispositions alive. It was but the other day that they caused this very massacre to be acted on the stage for the diversion of the descendants of those who committed it. In this tragic farce they produced the Cardinal of Lorraine in his robes of function, ordering general slaughter. Was this spectacle intended to make the Parisians abhor persecution, and loathe the effusion of blood?—No, it was to teach them to persecute their own pastors; it was to excite them, by raising a disgust and horror of their clergy, to an alacrity in hunting down to destruction an order, which, if it ought to 20 exist at all, ought to exist not only in safety, but in reverence. It was to stimulate their cannibal appetites (which one would think had been gorged sufficiently) by variety and seasoning; and to quicken them to an alertness in new murders and massacres, if it should suit the purpose of the Guises of the day. An assembly, in which sat a multitude of priests and prelates, was obliged to suffer this indignity at its door. The author was not sent to the galleys, nor the players to the house of correction. Not long after this exhibition, those players came forward to the assembly to 30 claim the rites of that very religion which they had dared to expose, and to shew their prostituted faces in the senate, whilst the archbishop of Paris, whose function was known to his people only by his prayers and benedictions, and his wealth only by his alms, is forced to abandon his house, and to fly from his flock, as from ravenous wolves, because,

truly, in the sixteenth century, the Cardinal of Lorraine was a rebel and a murderer.<sup>4</sup>

Such is the effect of the perversion of history, by those, who, for the same nefarious purposes, have perverted every other part of learning. But those who will stand upon that elevation of reason, which places centuries under our eye, and brings things to the true point of comparison, which obscures little names, and effaces the colours of little parties, and to which nothing can ascend but the spirit and moral  
 10 quality of human actions, will say to the teachers of the Palais Royal, 'The Cardinal of Lorraine was the murderer of the sixteenth century, you have the glory of being the murderers in the eighteenth; and this is the only difference between you.' But history, in the nineteenth century, better understood, and better employed, will, I trust, teach a civilized posterity to abhor the misdeeds of both these barbarous ages. It will teach future priests and magistrates not to retaliate upon the speculative and inactive atheists of  
 20 future times, the enormities committed by the present practical zealots and furious fanatics of that wretched error, which, in its quiescent state, is more than punished, whenever it is embraced. It will teach posterity not to make war upon either religion or philosophy, for the abuse which the hypocrites of both have made of the two most valuable blessings conferred upon us by the bounty of the universal Patron, who in all things eminently favours and protects the race of man.

If your clergy, or any clergy, should shew themselves vicious beyond the fair bounds allowed to human infirmity,  
 30 and to those professional faults which can hardly be separated from professional virtues, though their vices never can countenance the exercise of oppression, I do admit, that they would naturally have the effect of abating very much of our indignation against the tyrants who exceed measure

<sup>4</sup> This is on a supposition of the truth of this story, but he was not in France at the time. One name serves as well as another.

and justice in their punishment. I can allow in clergymen, through all their divisions, some tenaciousness of their own opinion ; some overflowings of zeal for its propagation ; some predilection to their own state and office ; some attachment to the interest of their own corps ; some preference to those who listen with docility to their doctrines, beyond those who scorn and deride them. I allow all this, because I am a man who have to deal with men, and who would not, through a violence of toleration, run into the greatest of all intolerance. I must bear with infirmities until they fester 10 into crimes.

Undoubtedly, the natural progress of the passions, from frailty to vice, ought to be prevented by a watchful eye and a firm hand. But is it true that the body of your clergy had past those limits of a just allowance ? From the general style of your late publications of all sorts, one would be led to believe that your clergy in France were a sort of monsters ; an horrible composition of superstition, ignorance, sloth, fraud, avarice, and tyranny. But is this true ? Is it true, that the lapse of time, the cessation of conflicting 20 interests, the woeful experience of the evils resulting from party rage, have had no sort of influence gradually to meliorate their minds ? Is it true, that they were daily renewing invasions on the civil power, troubling the domestic quiet of their country, and rendering the operations of its government feeble and precarious ? Is it true, that the clergy of our times have pressed down the laity with an iron hand, and were in all places lighting up the fires of a savage persecution ? Did they by every fraud endeavour to increase their estates ? Did they use to exceed the due demands on 30 estates that were their own ? Or, rigidly screwing up right into wrong, did they convert a legal claim into a vexatious extortion ? When not possessed of power, were they filled with the vices of those who envy it ? Were they inflamed with a violent litigious spirit of controversy ? Goaded on with the ambition of intellectual sovereignty, were they ready to

fly in the face of all magistracy, to fire churches, to massacre the priests of other descriptions, to pull down altars, and to make their way over the ruins of subverted governments to an empire of doctrine, sometimes flattering, sometimes forcing the consciences of men from the jurisdiction of public institutions into a submission to their personal authority, beginning with a claim of liberty and ending with an abuse of power?

These, or some of these, were the vices objected, and not 10 wholly without foundation, to several of the churchmen of former times, who belonged to the two great parties which then divided and distracted Europe.

If there was in France, as in other countries there visibly is, a great abatement, rather than any increase of these vices, instead of loading the present clergy with the crimes of other men, and the odious character of other times, in common equity they ought to be praised, encouraged, and supported, in their departure from a spirit which disgraced their predecessors, and for having assumed a 20 temper of mind and manners more suitable to their sacred function.

When my occasions took me into France, towards the close of the late reign, the clergy, under all their forms, engaged a considerable part of my curiosity. So far from finding (except from one set of men, not then very numerous, though very active) the complaints and discontents against that body, which some publications had given me reason to expect, I perceived little or no public or private uneasiness on their account. On further examination, I found the 30 clergy in general, persons of moderate minds and decorous manners; I include the seculars, and the regulars of both sexes. I had not the good fortune to know a great many of the parochial clergy; but in general I received a perfectly good account of their morals, and of their attention to their duties. With some of the higher clergy I had a personal acquaintance; and of the rest in that class, very good means

of information. They were, almost all of them, persons of noble birth. They resembled others of their own rank ; and where there was any difference, it was in their favour. They were more fully educated than the military noblesse ; so as by no means to disgrace their profession by ignorance, or by want of fitness for the exercise of their authority. They seemed to me, beyond the clerical character, liberal and open ; with the hearts of gentlemen, and men of honour ; neither insolent nor servile in their manners and conduct. They seemed to me rather a superior class ; a set of men, amongst whom 10 you would not be surprised to find a *Fénélon*. I saw among the clergy in Paris (many of the description are not to be met with any where) men of great learning and candour ; and I had reason to believe, that this description was not confined to Paris. What I found in other places, I know was accidental ; and therefore to be presumed a fair sample. I spent a few days in a provincial town, where, in the absence of the bishop, I passed my evenings with three clergymen, his vicars-general, persons who would have done honour to any church. They were all well-informed ; two 20 of them of deep, general, and extensive erudition, ancient and modern, oriental and western ; particularly in their own profession. They had a more extensive knowledge of our English divines than I expected ; and they entered into the genius of those writers with a critical accuracy. One of these gentlemen is since dead, the Abbé *Morangis*. I pay this tribute, without reluctance, to the memory of that noble, reverend, learned, and excellent person : and I should do the same, with equal cheerfulness, to the merits of the others, who I believe are still living, if I did not fear to hurt 30 those whom I am unable to serve.

Some of these ecclesiastics of rank, are, by all titles, persons deserving of general respect. They are deserving of gratitude from me, and from many English. If this letter should ever come into their hands, I hope they will believe there are those of our nation who feel for their unmerited

fall, and for the cruel confiscation of their fortunes, with no common sensibility. What I say of them is a testimony, as far as one feeble voice can go, which I owe to truth. Whenever the question of this unnatural persecution is concerned, I will pay it. No one shall prevent me from being just and grateful. The time is fitted for the duty ; and it is particularly becoming to show our justice and gratitude, when those who have deserved well of us and of mankind are labouring under popular obloquy and the persecutions of  
10 oppressive power.

You had before your revolution about an hundred and twenty bishops. A few of them were men of eminent sanctity, and charity without limit. When we talk of the heroic, of course we talk of rare virtue. I believe the instances of eminent depravity may be as rare amongst them as those of transcendent goodness. Examples of avarice and of licentiousness may be picked out, I do not question it, by those who delight in the investigation which leads to such discoveries. A man, as old as I am, will not be  
20 astonished that several in every description, do not lead that perfect life of self-denial, with regard to wealth or to pleasure, which is wished for by all, by some expected, but by none exacted with more rigour, than by those who are the most attentive to their own interests, or the most indulgent to their own passions. When I was in France, I am certain that the number of vicious prelates was not great. Certain individuals among them not distinguishable for the regularity of their lives, made some amends for their want of the severe virtues, in their possession of the liberal ; and were endowed  
30 with qualities which made them useful in the church and state. I am told, that with few exceptions, Louis the Sixteenth had been more attentive to character, in his promotions to that rank, than his immediate predecessor ; and I believe, as some spirit of reform has prevailed through the whole reign, that it may be true. But the present ruling power has shewn a disposition only to plunder the church.



It has punished *all* prelates ; which is to favour the vicious, at least in point of reputation. It has made a degrading pensionary establishment, to which no man of liberal ideas or liberal condition will destine his children. It must settle into the lowest classes of the people. As with you the inferior clergy are not numerous enough for their duties ; as these duties are, beyond measure, minute and toilsome ; as you have left no middle classes of clergy at their ease, in future nothing of science or erudition can exist in the Gallican church. To complete the project, without the 10 least attention to the rights of patrons, the assembly has provided in future an elective clergy ; an arrangement which will drive out of the clerical profession all men of sobriety ; all who can pretend to independence in their function or their conduct : and which will throw the whole direction of the public mind into the hands of a set of licentious, bold, crafty, factious, flattering wretches, of such condition and such habits of life as will make their contemptible pensions, in comparison of which the stipend of an exciseman is lucrative and honourable, an object of low and illiberal 20 intrigue. Those officers, whom they still call bishops, are to be elected to a provision comparatively mean, through the same arts, (that is, electioneering arts) by men of all religious tenets that are known or can be invented. The new law-givers have not ascertained any thing whatsoever concerning their qualifications, relative either to doctrine or to morals ; no more than they have done with regard to the subordinate clergy ; nor does it appear but that both the higher and the lower may, at their discretion, practise or preach any mode of religion or irreligion that they please. I do not yet see 30 what the jurisdiction of bishops over their subordinates is to be ; or whether they are to have any jurisdiction at all.

In short, Sir, it seems to me, that this new ecclesiastical establishment is intended only to be temporary, and preparatory to the utter abolition, under any of its forms, of the Christian religion, whenever the minds of men are prepared

for this last stroke against it, by the accomplishment of the plan for bringing its ministers into universal contempt. They who will not believe, that the philosophical fanatics who guide in these matters, have long entertained such a design, are utterly ignorant of their character and proceedings. These enthusiasts do not scruple to avow their opinion, that a state can subsist without any religion better than with one ; and that they are able to supply the place of any good which may be in it, by a project of their own—namely, by a sort of education they have imagined, founded in a knowledge of the physical wants of men ; progressively carried to an enlightened self-interest, which, when well understood, they tell us will identify with an interest more enlarged and public. The scheme of this education has been long known. Of late they distinguish it (as they have got an entire new nomenclature of technical terms) by the name of a *Civic Education*.

I hope their partisans in England, (to whom I rather attribute very inconsiderate conduct than the ultimate object in this detestable design) will succeed neither in the pillage of the ecclesiastics, nor in the introduction of a principle of popular election to our bishoprics and parochial cures. This, in the present condition of the world, would be the last corruption of the church ; the utter ruin of the clerical character ; the most dangerous shock that the state ever received through a misunderstood arrangement of religion. I know well enough that the bishoprics and cures, under kingly and seignoral patronage, as now they are in England, and as they have been lately in France, are sometimes acquired by unworthy methods ; but the other mode of ecclesiastical canvass subjects them infinitely more surely and more generally to the evil arts of low ambition, which, operating on and through greater numbers, will produce mischief in proportion.

Those of you who have robbed the clergy, think that they shall easily reconcile their conduct to all protestant nations ; because the clergy, whom they have thus plundered, degraded, and given over to mockery and scorn, are of the Roman

Catholic, that is, of *their own* pretended persuasion. I have no doubt that some miserable bigots will be found here as well as elsewhere, who hate sects and parties different from their own, more than they love the substance of religion; and who are more angry with those who differ from them in their particular plans and systems, than displeased with those who attack the foundation of our common hope. These men will write and speak on the subject in the manner that is to be expected from their temper and character. Burnet says, that when he was in France, in the year 1683, 'the method 10 which carried over the men of the finest parts to popery was this—they brought themselves to doubt of the whole Christian religion. When that was once done, it seemed a more indifferent thing of what side or form they continued outwardly.' If this was then the ecclesiastic policy of France, it is what they have since but too much reason to repent of. They preferred atheism to a form of religion not agreeable to their ideas. They succeeded in destroying that form; and atheism has succeeded in destroying them. I can readily give credit to Burnet's story; because I have observed too 20 much of a similar spirit (for a little of it is 'much too much') amongst ourselves. The humour, however, is not general.

The teachers who reformed our religion in England bore no sort of resemblance to your present reforming doctors in Paris. Perhaps they were (like those whom they opposed) rather more than could be wished under the influence of a party spirit; but they were most sincere believers; men of the most fervent and exalted piety; ready to die, as some of them did die, like true heroes in defence of their particular ideas of Christianity; as they would with equal fortitude, and more 30 cheerfully, for that stock of general truth, for the branches of which they contended with their blood. These men would have disavowed with horror those wretches who claimed a fellowship with them upon no other titles than those of their having pillaged the persons with whom they maintained controversies, and their having despised the common religion,

for the purity of which they exerted themselves with a zeal, which unequivocally bespoke their highest reverence for the substance of that system which they wished to reform. Many of their descendants have retained the same zeal ; but, (as less engaged in conflict) with more moderation. They do not forget that justice and mercy are substantial parts of religion. Impious men do not recommend themselves to their communion by iniquity and cruelty towards any description of their fellow creatures.

- 10 We hear these new teachers continually boasting of their spirit of toleration. That those persons should tolerate all opinions, who think none to be of estimation, is a matter of small merit. Equal neglect is not impartial kindness. The species of benevolence, which arises from contempt, is no true charity. There are in England abundance of men who tolerate in the true spirit of toleration. They think the dogmas of religion, though in different degrees, are all of moment ; and that amongst them there is, as amongst all things of value, a just ground of preference. They favour, therefore, and they
- 20 tolerate. They tolerate, not because they despise opinions, but because they respect justice. They would reverently and affectionately protect all religions, because they love and venerate the great principle upon which all agree, and the great object to which they are all directed. They begin more and more plainly to discern, that we have all a common cause, as against a common enemy. They will not be so misled by the spirit of faction, as not to distinguish what is done in favour of their subdivision, from those acts of hostility, which, through some particular description, are aimed at the
- 30 whole corps, in which they themselves, under another denomination, are included. It is impossible for me to say what may be the character of every description of men amongst us. But I speak for the greater part ; and for them, I must tell you, that sacrilege is no part of their doctrine of good works ; that, so far from calling you into their fellowship on such title, if your professors are admitted to their communion, they

must carefully conceal their doctrine of the lawfulness of the proscription of innocent men; and that they must make restitution of all stolen goods whatsoever. Till then they are none of ours.

You may suppose that we do not approve your confiscation of the revenues of bishops, and deans, and chapters, and parochial clergy possessing independent estates arising from land, because we have the same sort of establishment in England. That objection, you will say, cannot hold as to the confiscation of the goods of monks and nuns, and the abolition of 10 their order. It is true, that this particular part of your general confiscation does not affect England, as a precedent in point: but the reason applies; and it goes a great way. The long parliament confiscated the lands of deans and chapters in England on the same ideas upon which your assembly set to sale the lands of the monastic orders. But it is in the principle of injustice that the danger lies, and not in the description of persons on whom it is first exercised. I see, in a country very near us, a course of policy pursued, which sets justice, the common concern of mankind, at defiance. With 20 the national assembly of France, possession is nothing; law and usage are nothing. I see the national assembly openly reprobate the doctrine of prescription, which one of the greatest of their own lawyers\* tells us, with great truth, is a part of the law of nature. He tells us, that the positive ascertainment of its limits, and its security from invasion, were among the causes for which civil society itself has been instituted. If prescription be once shaken, no species of property is secure, when it once becomes an object large enough to tempt the cupidity of indigent power. I see a 30 practice perfectly correspondent to their contempt of this great fundamental part of natural law. I see the confiscators begin with bishops, and chapters, and monasteries; but I do not see them end there. I see the princes of the blood, who, by the oldest usages of that kingdom, held large landed

\* Domat.

estates, (hardly with the compliment of a debate) deprived of their possessions, and in lieu of their stable independent property, reduced to the hope of some precarious, charitable pension, at the pleasure of an assembly, which of course will pay little regard to the rights of pensioners at pleasure, when it despises those of legal proprietors. Flushed with the insolence of their first inglorious victories, and pressed by the distresses caused by their lust of unhallowed lucre, disappointed but not discouraged, they have at length ventured  
10 completely to subvert all property of all descriptions throughout the extent of a great kingdom. They have compelled all men, in all transactions of commerce, in the disposal of lands, in civil dealing, and through the whole communion of life, to accept as perfect payment and good and lawful tender, the symbols of their speculations on a projected sale of their plunder. What vestiges of liberty or property have they left? The tenant-right of a cabbage-garden, a year's interest in a hovel, the good-will of an ale-house, or a baker's shop, the very shadow of a constructive property, are more cere-  
20 moniously treated in our parliament than with you the oldest and most valuable landed possessions, in the hands of the most respectable personages, or than the whole body of the monied and commercial interest of your country. We entertain an high opinion of the legislative authority; but we have never dreamt that parliaments had any right whatever to violate property, to overrule prescription, or to force a currency of their own fiction in the place of that which is real, and recognized by the law of nations. But you, who began with refusing to submit to the most moderate re-  
30 straints, have ended by establishing an unheard of despotism. I find the ground upon which your confiscators go is this; that indeed their proceedings could not be supported in a court of justice; but that the rules of prescription cannot bind a legislative assembly.\* So that this legislative

\* Speech of Mr. Camus, published by order of the National Assembly.

assembly of a free nation sits, not for the security, but for the destruction of property, and not of property only, but of every rule and maxim which can give it stability, and of those instruments which can alone give it circulation.

When the Anabaptists of Münster, in the sixteenth century, had filled Germany with confusion by their system of levelling and their wild opinions concerning property, to what country in Europe did not the progress of their fury furnish just cause of alarm? Of all things, wisdom is the most terrified with epidemical fanaticism, because of all 10 enemies it is that against which she is the least able to furnish any kind of resource. We cannot be ignorant of the spirit of atheistical fanaticism, that is inspired by a multitude of writings, dispersed with incredible assiduity and expense, and by sermons delivered in all the streets and places of public resort in Paris. These writings and sermons have filled the populace with a black and savage atrocity of mind, which supersedes in them the common feelings of nature, as well as all sentiments of morality and religion; insomuch that these wretches are induced to bear with a sullen patience 20 the intolerable distresses brought upon them by the violent convulsions and permutations that have been made in property.\* The spirit of proselytism attends this spirit of

\* Whether the following description is strictly true I know not; but it is what the publishers would have pass for true, in order to animate others. In a letter from Toul, given in one of their papers, is the following passage concerning the people of that district: '*Dans la Révolution actuelle, ils ont résisté à toutes les séductions du bigotisme, aux persécutions et aux tracasseries des Ennemis de la Révolution. Oubliant leurs plus grands intérêts pour rendre hommage aux vues d'ordre général qui ont déterminé l'Assemblée Nationale, ils voient, sans se plaindre, supprimer cette foule d'établissmens ecclésiastiques par lesquels ils subsistoient; et même, en perdant leur siège épiscopal, la seule de toutes ces ressources qui pouvoit, ou plutôt qui devoit, en toute équité, leur être conservée; condamnés à la plus effrayante misère, sans avoir été ni pu être entendus, ils ne murmurent point, ils restent fidèles aux principes du plus pur patriotisme; ils sont encore prêts à verser leur sang pour le maintien de la Constitution, qui va réduire leur Ville à la plus déplorable nullité.*' ['During the present Revolution they have resisted all the temptations of bigotry, and all the persecution and worrying of the enemies of the Revolu-

fanaticism. They have societies to cabal and correspond at home and abroad for the propagation of their tenets. The republic of Berne, one of the happiest, the most prosperous, and the best governed countries upon earth, is one of the great objects at the destruction of which they aim. I am told they have in some measure succeeded in sowing there the seeds of discontent. They are busy throughout Germany. Spain and Italy have not been untried. England is not left out of the comprehensive scheme of their malignant  
 O charity ; and in England we find those who stretch out their arms to them, who recommend their examples from more than one pulpit, and who choose, in more than one periodical meeting, publicly to correspond with them, to applaud them, and to hold them up as objects for imitation ; who receive from them tokens of confraternity, and standards consecrated amidst their rites and mysteries ;\* who suggest to them leagues of perpetual amity, at the very time when the power, to which our constitution has exclusively delegated the federative capacity of this kingdom, may find it  
 O expedient to make war upon them.

It is not the confiscation of our church property from this example in France that I dread, though I think this would

tion. Forgetting their greatest interests in their desire to do homage to the views of general order which have guided the National Assembly, they see without complaint the suppression of that crowd of ecclesiastical establishments by which they lived. Even though they have lost their episcopal see, the single one among all their resources which might, or rather ought in fairness to have been left to them—though they are condemned to the most frightful misery, without having been heard or having had a chance of being heard, they do not murmur ; they remain faithful to the principles of the purest patriotism ; they are still ready to shed their blood for the maintenance of the Constitution, which is about to reduce their Town to the most deplorable insignificance.] These people are not supposed to have endured those sufferings and injustices in a struggle for liberty, for the same account states truly that they had been always free ; their patience in beggary and ruin, and their suffering, without remonstrance, the most flagrant and confessed injustice, if strictly true, can be nothing but the effect of this dire fanaticism. A great multitude all over France is in the same condition and the same temper.

\* See the proceedings of the confederation at *Nantz*.



be no trifling evil. The great source of my solicitude is, lest it should ever be considered in England as the policy of a state, to seek a resource in confiscations of any kind ; or that any one description of citizens should be brought to regard any of the others as their proper prey.\* Nations are wading deeper and deeper into an ocean of boundless debt. Public debts, which at first were a security to governments, by interesting many in the public tranquillity, are likely in their excess to become the means of their subversion. If governments provide for these debts by heavy impositions, 10

\* 'Si plures sunt ii quibus improbe datum est, quam illi quibus injuste ademptum est, idcirco plus etiam valent? Non enim numero hæc judicantur, sed pondere. Quam autem habet æquitatem, ut agrum multis annis, aut etiam sæculis ante possessum, qui nullum habuit habeat; qui autem habuit amittat? Ac, propter hoc injuriæ genus, Lacedæmonii Lysandrum Ephorum expulerunt: Agin regem (quod nunquam antea apud eos acciderat) necaverunt; exque eo tempore tantæ discordiæ secutæ sunt, ut et tyranni exsisterint, et optimates exterminarentur, et præclarissime constituta respublica dilaberetur. Nec vero solum ipsa cecidit, sed etiam reliquam Græciam evertit contagionibus malorum, quæ a Lacedæmoniis profectæ manarunt latius.' ['If those to whom a thing is wrongly given are more in number than those from whom it is unjustly taken away, their claim to it is not on that account the stronger. These matters are decided not by number, but by weight. What justice is there in taking land, which has been occupied for years, or even for generations, from its owner, and giving it to a man who had none? It was for injustice of this kind that the Lacedæmonians expelled the Ephor Lysander, and put their king Agis to death—a thing which had never been done among them before. From that moment such discords arose, that tyrants sprang up, men of rank were banished, and the commonwealth, which was so admirably constituted, fell to pieces. Nor did it fall alone. It dragged down with it the rest of Greece by the infection of evils which, beginning with itself, extended beyond it.']—After speaking of the conduct of the model of true patriots, Aratus of Sicyon, which was in a very different spirit, he says, 'Sic par est agere cum civibus; non ut bis jam vidimus, hastam in foro ponere et bona civium voci subijcere præconis. At ille Græcus (id quod fuit sapientis et prestantis viri) omnibus consulendum esse putavit: eaque est summa ratio et sapientia boni civis, commoda civium non divellere, sed omnes eadem æquitate continere.' Cic. Off. 1. 2. ['This is the right way to deal with citizens, and not, as has already been done twice in our times, to hold a sale in the forum, and to put up the goods of the citizens to auction. That famous Greek, as we should expect from a wise and good man, thought that the interests of all should be regarded. The highest rule and wisdom of a good citizen is not to scatter the property of the citizens, but to restrain them all by equal justice.']

they perish by becoming odious to the people. If they do not provide for them, they will be undone by the efforts of the most dangerous of all parties ; I mean an extensive discontented monied interest, injured and not destroyed. The men who compose this interest look for their security, in the first instance, to the fidelity of government ; in the second, to its power. If they find the old governments effete, worn out, and with their springs relaxed, so as not to be of sufficient vigour for their purposes, they may seek new ones

10 that shall be possessed of more energy ; and this energy will be derived, not from an acquisition of resources, but from a contempt of justice. Revolutions are favourable to confiscation ; and it is impossible to know under what obnoxious names the next confiscations will be authorised. I am sure that the principles predominant in France extend to very many persons and descriptions of persons in all countries who think their innoxious indolence their security. This kind of innocence in proprietors may be argued into inutility ; and inutility into an unfitness for their estates.

20 Many parts of Europe are in open disorder. In many others there is a hollow murmuring under ground ; a confused movement is felt, that threatens a general earthquake in the political world. Already confederacies and correspondences of the most extraordinary nature are forming, in several countries.\* In such a state of things we ought to hold ourselves upon our guard. In all mutations (if mutations must be) the circumstance which will serve most to blunt the edge of their mischief, and to promote what good may be in them, is, that they should find us with our minds

30 tenacious of justice, and tender of property.

But it will be argued, that this confiscation in France ought not to alarm other nations. They say it is not made from wanton rapacity ; that it is a great measure of national

\* See two books entitled, *Einige Originalschriften des Illuminatenordens. System und Folgen des Illuminatenordens.* München, 1787.

policy, adopted to remove an extensive, inveterate, superstitious mischief. It is with the greatest difficulty that I am able to separate policy from justice. Justice is itself the great standing policy of civil society; and any eminent departure from it, under any circumstances, lies under the suspicion of being no policy at all.

When men are encouraged to go into a certain mode of life by the existing laws, and protected in that mode as in a lawful occupation—when they have accommodated all their ideas, and all their habits to it—when the law had long made their adherence to its rules a ground of reputation, and their departure from them a ground of disgrace and even of penalty—I am sure it is unjust in legislature, by an arbitrary act, to offer a sudden violence to their minds and their feelings; forcibly to degrade them from their state and condition, and to stigmatize with shame and infamy that character and those customs which before had been made the measure of their happiness and honour. If to this be added an expulsion from their habitations, and a confiscation of all their goods, I am not sagacious enough to discover how this despotic sport, made of the feelings, consciences, prejudices, and properties of men, can be discriminated from the rankest tyranny.

If the injustice of the course pursued in France be clear, the policy of the measure, that is, the public benefit to be expected from it, ought to be at least as evident, and at least as important. To a man who acts under the influence of no passion, who has nothing in view in his projects but the public good, a great difference will immediately strike him, between what policy would dictate on the original introduction of such institutions, and on a question of their total abolition, where they have cast their roots wide and deep, and where by long habit things more valuable than themselves are so adapted to them, and in a manner interwoven with them, that the one cannot be destroyed without notably impairing the other. He might be embarrassed, if the case

were really such as sophisters represent it in their paltry style of debating. But in this, as in most questions of state, there is a middle. There is something else than the mere alternative of absolute destruction, or unreformed existence. *Spartam nactus es ; hanc exorna* [You have got possession of *Sparta ; adorn it*]. This is, in my opinion, a rule of profound sense, and ought never to depart from the mind of an honest reformer. I cannot conceive how any man can have brought himself to that pitch of presumption, to consider his country as nothing but *carte blanche* [A sheet of white paper], upon 10 which he may scribble whatever he pleases. A man full of warm speculative benevolence may wish his society otherwise constituted than he finds it ; but a good patriot, and a true politician, always considers how he shall make the most of the existing materials of his country. A disposition to preserve, and an ability to improve, taken together, would be my standard of a statesman. Every thing else is vulgar in the conception, perilous in the execution.

There are moments in the fortune of states when particular men are called to make improvements by great 20 mental exertion. In those moments, even when they seem to enjoy the confidence of their prince and country, and to be invested with full authority, they have not always apt instruments. A politician, to do great things, looks for a power, what our workmen call a *purchase* ; and if he finds that power, in politics as in mechanics he cannot be at a loss to apply it. In the monastic institutions, in my opinion, was found a great power for the mechanism of politic benevolence. There were revenues with a public direction ; there 30 were men wholly set apart and dedicated to public purposes, without any other than public ties and public principles ; men without the possibility of converting the estate of the community into a private fortune ; men denied to self-interests, whose avarice is for some community ; men to whom personal poverty is honour, and implicit obedience stands in the place of freedom. In vain shall a man look to

the possibility of making such things when he wants them. The winds blow as they list. These institutions are the products of enthusiasm; they are the instruments of wisdom. Wisdom cannot create materials; they are the gifts of nature or of chance; her pride is in the use. The perennial existence of bodies corporate and their fortunes are things particularly suited to a man who has long views: who meditates designs that require time in fashioning; and which propose duration when they are accomplished. He is not deserving to rank high, or even to be mentioned in the 10 order of great statesmen, who, having obtained the command and direction of such a power as existed in the wealth, the discipline, and the habits of such corporations, as those which you have rashly destroyed, cannot find any way of converting it to the great and lasting benefit of his country. On the view of this subject a thousand uses suggest themselves to a contriving mind. To destroy any power, growing wild from the rank productive force of the human mind, is almost tantamount, in the moral world, to the destruction of the apparently active properties of bodies in the material. 20 It would be like the attempt to destroy (if it were in our competence to destroy) the expansive force of fixed air in nitre, or the power of steam, or of electricity, or of magnetism. These energies always existed in nature, and they were always discernible. They seemed, some of them unserviceable, some noxious, some no better than a sport to children; until contemplative ability, combining with practic skill, tamed their wild nature, subdued them to use, and rendered them at once the most powerful and the most tractable agents, in subservience to the great views and 30 designs of men. Did fifty thousand persons, whose mental and whose bodily labour you might direct, and so many hundred thousand a year of a revenue, which was neither lazy nor superstitious, appear too big for your abilities to wield? Had you no way of using the men but by converting monks into pensioners? Had you no way of turning the

revenue to account, but through the improvident resource of a spendthrift sale? If you were thus destitute of mental funds, the proceeding is in its natural course. Your politicians do not understand their trade; and therefore they sell their tools.

But the institutions savour of superstition in their very principle; and they nourish it by a permanent and standing influence. This I do not mean to dispute; but this ought not to hinder you from deriving from superstition itself any  
10 resources which may thence be furnished for the public advantage. You derive benefits from many dispositions and many passions of the human mind, which are of as doubtful a colour in the moral eye, as superstition itself. It was your business to correct and mitigate every thing which was noxious in this passion, as in all the passions. But is superstition the greatest of all possible vices? In its possible excess I think it becomes a very great evil. It is, however, a moral subject; and of course admits of all degrees and all modifications. Superstition is the religion of feeble minds;  
20 and they must be tolerated in an intermixture of it, in some trifling or some enthusiastic shape or other, else you will deprive weak minds of a resource found necessary to the strongest. The body of all true religion consists, to be sure, in obedience to the will of the sovereign of the world; in a confidence in his declarations; and an imitation of his perfections. The rest is our own. It may be prejudicial to the great end; it may be auxiliary. Wise men, who as such are not admirers, not admirers at least of the *Munera Terræ* [*Gifts of the earth*], are not violently attached to these things,  
30 nor do they violently hate them. Wisdom is not the most severe corrector of folly. They are the rival follies, which mutually wage so unrelenting a war; and which make so cruel a use of their advantages, as they can happen to engage the immoderate vulgar on the one side or the other in their quarrels. Prudence would be neuter; but if, in the contention between fond attachment and fierce antipathy concern-

ing things in their nature not made to produce such heats, a prudent man were obliged to make a choice of what errors and excesses of enthusiasm he would condemn or bear, perhaps he would think the superstition which builds, to be more tolerable than that which demolishes ; that which adorns a country, than that which deforms it ; that which endows, than that which plunders ; that which disposes to mistaken beneficence, than that which stimulates to real injustice ; that which leads a man to refuse to himself lawful pleasures, than that which snatches from others the scanty 10 subsistence of their self-denial. Such, I think, is very nearly the state of the question between the ancient founders of monkish superstition, and the superstition of the pretended philosophers of the hour.

For the present I postpone all considerations of the supposed public profit of the sale, which however I conceive to be perfectly delusive. I shall here only consider it as a transfer of property. On the policy of that transfer I shall trouble you with a few thoughts.

In every prosperous community something more is produced than goes to the immediate support of the producer. This surplus forms the income of the landed capitalist. It will be spent by a proprietor who does not labour. But this idleness is itself the spring of labour ; this repose the spur to industry. The only concern of the state is, that the capital taken in rent from the land, should be returned again to the industry from whence it came ; and that its expenditure should be with the least possible detriment to the morals of those who expend it, and to those of the people to whom it is returned. 20

In all the views, of receipt, expenditure, and personal employment, a sober legislator would carefully compare the possessor whom he was recommended to expel, with the stranger who was proposed to fill his place. Before the inconveniences are incurred which *must* attend all violent revolutions in property through extensive confiscation, we

ought to have some rational assurance that the purchasers of the confiscated property will be in a considerable degree more laborious, more virtuous, more sober, less disposed to extort an unreasonable proportion of the gains of the labourer, or to consume on themselves a larger share than is fit for the measure of an individual, or that they should be qualified to dispense the surplus in a more steady and equal mode, so as to answer the purposes of a politic expenditure, than the old possessors, call those possessors, bishops, or  
10 canons, or commendatory abbots, or monks, or what you please. 'The monks are lazy.'—Be it so. Suppose them no otherwise employed than by singing in the choir. They are as usefully employed as those who neither sing nor say. As usefully even as those who sing upon the stage. They are as usefully employed as if they worked from dawn to dark in the innumerable servile, degrading, unseemly, unmanly, and often most unwholesome and pestiferous occupations, to which by the social economy so many wretches are inevitably doomed. If it were not generally pernicious to  
20 disturb the natural course of things, and to impede, in any degree, the great wheel of circulation which is turned by the strangely directed labour of these unhappy people, I should be infinitely more inclined forcibly to rescue them from their miserable industry, than violently to disturb the tranquil repose of monastic quietude. Humanity, and perhaps policy, might better justify me in the one than in the other. It is a subject on which I have often reflected, and never reflected without feeling from it. I am sure that no consideration, except the necessity of submitting to the yoke of luxury,  
30 and the despotism of fancy, who in their own imperious way will distribute the surplus product of the soil, can justify the toleration of such trades and employments in a well-regulated state. But for this purpose of distribution, it seems to me, that the idle expenses of monks are quite as well directed as the idle expenses of us lay-loiterers.

When the advantages of the possession, and of the project,



are on a par, there is no motive for a change. But in the present case, perhaps they are not upon a par, and the difference is in favour of the possession. It does not appear to me, that the expenses of those whom you are going to expel, do, in fact, take a course so directly and so generally leading to vitiate and degrade and render miserable those through whom they pass, as the expenses of those favourites whom you are intruding into their houses. Why should the expenditure of a great landed property, which is a dispersion of the surplus product of the soil, appear intolerable to you 10 or to me, when it takes its course through the accumulation of vast libraries, which are the history of the force and weakness of the human mind ; through great collections of ancient records, medals, and coins, which attest and explain laws and customs ; through paintings and statues, that, by imitating nature, seem to extend the limits of creation ; through grand monuments of the dead, which continue the regards and connexions of life beyond the grave ; through collections of the specimens of nature, which become a representative assembly of all the classes and families of the 20 world, that by disposition facilitate, and by exciting curiosity, open the avenues to science ? If, by great permanent establishments, all these objects of expense are better secured from the inconstant sport of personal caprice and personal extravagance, are they worse than if the same tastes prevailed in scattered individuals ? Does not the sweat of the mason and carpenter, who toil in order to partake the sweat of the peasant, flow as pleasantly and as salubriously, in the construction and repair of the majestic edifices of religion, as in the painted booths and 30 sordid sties of vice and luxury ; as honourably and as profitably in repairing those sacred works, which grow hoary with innumerable years, as on the momentary receptacles of transient voluptuousness ; in opera-houses, and brothels, and gaming-houses, and club-houses, and obelisks in the Champ de Mars ? Is the surplus product of the olive and the

vine worse employed in the frugal sustenance of persons, whom the fictions of a pious imagination raise to dignity by construing in the service of God, than in pampering the innumerable multitude of those who are degraded by being made useless domestics subservient to the pride of man? Are the decorations of temples an expenditure less worthy a wise man than ribbons, and laces, and national cockades, and petites maisons, and petits soupers, and all the innumerable fopperies and follies in which opulence sports away the  
 10 burthen of its superfluity?

We tolerate even these; not from love of them, but for fear of worse. We tolerate them, because property and liberty, to a degree, require that toleration. But why proscribe the other, and surely, in every point of view, the more laudable use of estates? Why, through the violation of all property, through an outrage upon every principle of liberty, forcibly carry them from the better to the worse?

This comparison between the new individuals and the old corps is made upon a supposition that no reform could be  
 20 made in the latter. But in a question of reformation, I always consider corporate bodies, whether sole or consisting of many, to be much more susceptible of a public direction by the power of the state, in the use of their property, and in the regulation of modes and habits of life in their members, than private citizens ever can be, or perhaps ought to be; and this seems to me a very material consideration for those who undertake anything which merits the name of a politic enterprise.—So far as to the estates of monasteries.

30 With regard to the estates possessed by bishops and canons, and commendatory abbots, I cannot find out for what reason some landed estates may not be held otherwise than by inheritance. Can any philosophic spoiler undertake to demonstrate the positive or the comparative evil, of having a certain, and that too a large portion of landed property, passing in succession through persons whose title to it

is, always in theory, and often in fact, an eminent degree of piety, morals, and learning ; a property which, by its destination, in their turn, and on the score of merit, gives to the noblest families renovation and support, to the lowest the means of dignity and elevation ; a property, the tenure of which is the performance of some duty, whatever value you may choose to set upon that duty—and the character of whose proprietors demand at least an exterior decorum and gravity of manners ; who are to exercise a generous but temperate hospitality ; part of whose income they are to 10 consider as a trust for charity ; and who, even when they fail in their trust, when they slide from their character, and degenerate into a mere common secular nobleman or gentleman, are in no respect worse than those who may succeed them in their forfeited possessions ? Is it better that estates should be held by those who have no duty than by those who have one ? By those whose character and destination point to virtues, than by those who have no rule and direction in the expenditure of their estates but their own will and appetite ? Nor are these estates held altogether in the 20 character or with the evils supposed inherent in mortmain. They pass from hand to hand with a more rapid circulation than any other. No excess is good ; and therefore too great a proportion of landed property may be held officially for life ; but it does not seem to me of material injury to any commonwealth, that there should exist some estates that have a chance of being acquired by other means than the previous acquisition of money.

THIS letter is grown to a great length, though it is indeed short with regard to the infinite extent of the subject. 30 Various avocations have from time to time called my mind from the subject. I was not sorry to give myself leisure to observe whether, in the proceedings of the national assembly, I might not find reasons to change or to qualify some of my first sentiments. Every thing has confirmed me more

strongly in my first opinions. It was my original purpose to take a view of the principles of the national assembly with regard to the great and fundamental establishments ; and to compare the whole of what you have substituted in the place of what you have destroyed, with the several members of our British constitution. But this plan is of greater extent than at first I computed, and I find that you have little desire to take the advantage of any examples. At present I must content myself with some remarks upon  
10 your establishments ; reserving for another time what I proposed to say concerning the spirit of our British monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, as practically they exist.

I have taken a review of what has been done by the governing power in France. I have certainly spoke of it with freedom. Those whose principle it is to despise the ancient permanent sense of mankind, and to set up a scheme of society on new principles, must naturally expect that such of us who think better of the judgment of the human race than of theirs, should consider both them and their  
20 devices, as men and schemes upon their trial. They must take it for granted that we attend much to their reason, but not at all to their authority. They have not one of the great influencing prejudices of mankind in their favour. They avow their hostility to opinion. Of course they must expect no support from that influence, which, with every other authority, they have deposed from the seat of its jurisdiction.

I can never consider this assembly as any thing else than a voluntary association of men, who have availed themselves  
30 of circumstances, to seize upon the power of the state. They have not the sanction and authority of the character under which they first met. They have assumed another of a very different nature ; and have completely altered and inverted all the relations in which they originally stood. They do not hold the authority they exercise under any constitutional law of the state. They have departed from the instructions

of the people by whom they were sent ; which instructions, as the assembly did not act in virtue of any ancient usage or settled law, were the sole source of their authority. The most considerable of their acts have not been done by great majorities ; and in this sort of near divisions, which carry only the constructive authority of the whole, strangers will consider reasons as well as resolutions.

If they had set up this new experimental government as a necessary substitute for an expelled tyranny, mankind would anticipate the time of prescription, which, through long 10 usage, mellow into legality governments that were violent in their commencement. All those who have affections which lead them to the conservation of civil order would recognize, even in its cradle, the child as legitimate, which has been produced from those principles of cogent expediency to which all just governments owe their birth, and on which they justify their continuance. But they will be late and reluctant in giving any sort of countenance to the operations of a power, which has derived its birth from no law and no necessity ; but which on the contrary has had its origin in 20 those vices and sinister practices by which the social union is often disturbed and sometimes destroyed. This assembly has hardly a year's prescription. We have their own word for it that they have made a revolution. To make a revolution is a measure which, *prima fronte* [*on the face of it*], requires an apology. To make a revolution is to subvert the ancient state of our country ; and no common reasons are called for to justify so violent a proceeding. The sense of mankind authorizes us to examine into the mode of acquiring new power, and to criticise on the use that is 30 made of it, with less awe and reverence than that which is usually conceded to a settled and recognized authority.

In obtaining and securing their power, the assembly proceeds upon principles the most opposite from those which appear to direct them in the use of it. An observation on this difference will let us into the true spirit of their conduct.

Every thing which they have done, or continue to do, in order to obtain and keep their power, is by the most common arts. They proceed exactly as their ancestors of ambition have done before them. Trace them through all their artifices, frauds, and violences, you can find nothing at all that is new. They follow precedents and examples with the punctilious exactness of a pleader. They never depart an iota from the authentic formulas of tyranny and usurpation. But in all the regulations relative to the public good, the  
 10 spirit has been the very reverse of this. There they commit the whole to the mercy of untried speculations ; they abandon the dearest interests of the public to those loose theories, to which none of them would choose to trust the slightest of his private concerns. They make this difference, because in their desire of obtaining and securing power they are thoroughly in earnest ; there they travel in the beaten road. The public interests, because about them they have no real solicitude, they abandon wholly to chance ; I say to chance, because their schemes have nothing in experience to prove  
 20 their tendency beneficial.

We must always see with a pity not unmixed with respect the errors of those who are timid and doubtful of themselves with regard to points wherein the happiness of mankind is concerned. But in these gentlemen there is nothing of the tender parental solicitude which fears to cut up the infant for the sake of an experiment. In the vastness of their promises, and the confidence of their predictions, they far outdo all the boasting of empirics. The arrogance of their pretensions, in a manner provokes, and challenges us to an enquiry  
 30 into their foundation.

I am convinced that there are men of considerable parts among the popular leaders in the national assembly. Some of them display eloquence in their speeches and their writings. This cannot be without powerful and cultivated talents. But eloquence may exist without a proportionable degree of wisdom. When I speak of ability, I am obliged to

distinguish. What they have done towards the support of their system bespeaks no ordinary men. In the system itself, taken as the scheme of a republic constructed for procuring the prosperity and security of the citizen, and for promoting the strength and grandeur of the state, I confess myself unable to find out anything which displays, in a single instance, the work of a comprehensive and disposing mind, or even the provisions of a vulgar prudence. Their purpose everywhere seems to have been to evade and slip aside from *difficulty*. This it has been the glory of the great 10 masters in all the arts to confront, and to overcome; and when they had overcome the first difficulty, to turn it into an instrument for new conquests over new difficulties; thus to enable them to extend the empire of their science; and even to push forward beyond the reach of their original thoughts, the land-marks of the human understanding itself. Difficulty is a severe instructor, set over us by the supreme ordinance of a parental guardian and legislator, who knows us better than we know ourselves, as he loves us better too. *Pater ipse colendi haud facilem esse viam voluit:* 20

[*Not to dull Indolence and transient toil  
Great Jove resign'd the conquest of the soil.*]

He that wrestles with us strengthens our nerves, and sharpens our skill. Our antagonist is our helper. This amicable conflict with difficulty obliges us to an intimate acquaintance with our object, and compels us to consider it in all its relations. It will not suffer us to be superficial. It is the want of nerves of understanding for such a task; it is the degenerate fondness for tricking short-cuts, and little fallacious facilities, that has in so many parts of the world created 30 governments with arbitrary powers. They have created the late arbitrary monarchy of France. They have created the arbitrary republic of Paris. With them defects in wisdom are to be supplied by the plenitude of force. They get nothing by it. Commencing their labours on a principle of sloth, they have the common fortune of slothful men. The

difficulties which they rather had eluded than escaped, meet them again in their course ; they multiply and thicken on them ; they are involved, through a labyrinth of confused detail, in an industry without limit, and without direction ; and, in conclusion, the whole of their work becomes feeble, vicious, and insecure.

It is this inability to wrestle with difficulty which has obliged the arbitrary assembly of France to commence their schemes of reform with abolition and total destruction.\*  
 10 But is it in destroying and pulling down that skill is displayed ? Your mob can do this as well at least as your assemblies. The shallowest understanding, the rudest hand, is more than equal to that task. Rage and phrenzy will pull down more in half an hour, than prudence, deliberation, and foresight can build up in an hundred years. The errors and defects of old establishments are visible and palpable. It calls for little ability to point them out ; and where absolute power is given, it requires but a word wholly to abolish the vice and the establishment together. The same lazy but  
 20 restless disposition, which loves sloth and hates quiet, directs these politicians, when they come to work, for supplying the place of what they have destroyed. To make every

\* A leading member of the assembly, M. Rabaud de St. Etienne, has expressed the principle of all their proceedings as clearly as possible. Nothing can be more simple :—*‘Tous les établissemens en France couronnent le malheur du peuple : pour le rendre heureux il faut le renouveler ; changer ses idées ; changer ses lois ; changer ses mœurs ; . . . . . changer les hommes ; changer les choses ; changer les mots ; . . . . . tout détruire ; oui, tout détruire ; puisque tout est à recréer.’* [‘All the establishments in France crown the misery of the people. To make the people happy, we must remake them ; change their ideas ; change their laws ; change their manners . . . . . change the men ; change the things ; change the names . . . . . destroy every thing ; yes, destroy every thing ; for every thing has to be created afresh.’] This gentleman was chosen president in an assembly not sitting at the *Quinze vingt*, or the *Petites Maisons* ; and composed of persons giving themselves out to be rational beings ; but neither his ideas, language, or conduct, differ in the smallest degree from the discourses, opinions, and actions of those within and without the assembly, who direct the operations of the machine now at work in France.



thing the reverse of what they have seen is quite as easy as to destroy. No difficulties occur in what has never been tried. Criticism is almost baffled in discovering the defects of what has not existed ; and eager enthusiasm, and cheating hope, have all the wide field of imagination in which they may expatiate with little or no opposition.

At once to preserve and to reform is quite another thing. When the useful parts of an old establishment are kept, and what is superadded is to be fitted to what is retained, a vigorous mind, steady persevering attention, various powers of comparison and combination, and the resources of an understanding fruitful in expedients are to be exercised ; they are to be exercised in a continued conflict with the combined force of opposite vices ; with the obstinacy that rejects all improvement, and the levity that is fatigued and disgusted with every thing of which it is in possession. But you may object—‘ A process of this kind is slow. It is not fit for an assembly, which glories in performing in a few months the work of ages. Such a mode of reforming, possibly might take up many years.’ Without question it might ; and it ought. It is one of the excellencies of a method in which time is amongst the assistants, that its operation is slow, and in some cases almost imperceptible. If circumspection and caution are a part of wisdom, when we work only upon inanimate matter, surely they become a part of duty too, when the subject of our demolition and construction is not brick and timber, but sentient beings, by the sudden alteration of whose state, condition, and habits, multitudes may be rendered miserable. But it seems as if it were the prevalent opinion in Paris, that an unfeeling heart, and an undoubting confidence, are the sole qualifications for a perfect legislator. Far different are my ideas of that high office. The true lawgiver ought to have an heart full of sensibility. He ought to love and respect his kind, and to fear himself. It may be allowed to his temperament to catch his ultimate object with an intuitive glance ; but

his movements towards it ought to be deliberate. Political arrangement, as it is a work for social ends, is to be only wrought by social means. There mind must conspire with mind. Time is required to produce that union of minds which alone can produce all the good we aim at. Our patience will achieve more than our force. If I might venture to appeal to what is so much out of fashion in Paris, I mean, to experience, I should tell you, that in my course I have known, and, according to my measure, have co-  
10 operated with great men; and I have never yet seen any plan which has not been mended by the observations of those who were much inferior in understanding to the person who took the lead in the business. By a slow but well-sustained progress, the effect of each step is watched; the good or ill success of the first gives light to us in the second; and so, from light to light, we are conducted with safety through the whole series. We see that the parts of the system do not clash. The evils latent in the most promising contrivances are provided for as they arise. One advantage  
20 is as little as possible sacrificed to another. We compensate, we reconcile, we balance. We are enabled to unite into a consistent whole the various anomalies and contending principles that are found in the minds and affairs of men. From hence arises, not an excellence in simplicity, but one far superior, an excellence in composition. Where the great interests of mankind are concerned through a long succession of generations, that succession ought to be admitted into some share in the councils which are so deeply to affect them. If justice requires this, the work itself requires the  
30 aid of more minds than one age can furnish. It is from this view of things that the best legislators have been often satisfied with the establishment of some sure, solid, and ruling principle in government; a power like that which some of the philosophers have called a plastic nature; and having fixed the principle, they have left it afterwards to its own operation.

To proceed in this manner, that is, to proceed with a presiding principle, and a prolific energy, is with me the criterion of profound wisdom. What your politicians think the marks of a bold, hardy genius, are only proofs of a deplorable want of ability. By their violent haste, and their defiance of the process of nature, they are delivered over blindly to every projector and adventurer, to every alchymist and empiric. They despair of turning to account any thing that is common. Diet is nothing in their system of remedy. The worst of it is, that this their despair of curing common 10 distempers by regular methods, arises not only from defect of comprehension, but, I fear, from some malignity of disposition. Your legislators seem to have taken their opinions of all professions, ranks, and offices, from the declamations and buffooneries of satirists : who would themselves be astonished if they were held to the letter of their own descriptions. By listening only to these, your leaders regard all things only on the side of their vices and faults, and view those vices and faults under every colour of exaggeration. It is undoubtedly true, though it may seem 20 paradoxical ; but in general, those who are habitually employed in finding and displaying faults, are unqualified for the work of reformation : because their minds are not only unfurnished with patterns of the fair and good, but by habit they come to take no delight in the contemplation of those things. By hating vices too much, they come to love men too little. It is therefore not wonderful, that they should be indisposed and unable to serve them. From hence arises the complexional disposition of some of your guides to pull every thing in pieces. At this malicious game they display 30 the whole of their *quadrumanous* activity. As to the rest, the paradoxes of eloquent writers, brought forth purely as a sport of fancy, to try their talents, to rouse attention, and excite surprise, are taken up by these gentlemen, not in the spirit of the original authors, as means of cultivating their taste and improving their style. These paradoxes become

with them serious grounds of action, upon which they proceed in regulating the most important concerns of the state. Cicero ludicrously describes Cato as endeavouring to act in the commonwealth upon the school paradoxes which exercised the wits of the junior students in the Stoic philosophy. If this was true of Cato, these gentlemen copy after him in the manner of some persons who lived about his time — *pede nudo Cutionem*. Mr. Hume told me, that he had from Rousseau himself the secret of his principles of composition. That acute, though eccentric, observer had perceived, that to strike and interest the public, the marvellous must be produced ; that the marvellous of the heathen mythology had long since lost its effect ; that giants, magicians, fairies, and heroes of romance which succeeded, had exhausted the portion of credulity which belonged to their age ; that now nothing was left to a writer but that species of the marvellous, which might still be produced, and with as great an effect as ever, though in another way ; that is, the marvellous in life, in manners, in characters, and in extraordinary situations, giving rise to new and unlooked-for strokes in politics and morals. I believe, that were Rousseau alive, and in one of his lucid intervals, he would be shocked at the practical frenzy of his scholars, who in their paradoxes are servile imitators ; and even in their incredulity discover an implicit faith.

Men who undertake considerable things, even in a regular way, ought to give us ground to presume ability. But the physician of the state, who, not satisfied with the cure of distempers, undertakes to regenerate constitutions, ought to shew uncommon powers. Some very unusual appearances of wisdom ought to display themselves on the face of the designs of those who appeal to no practice, and who copy after no model. Has any such been manifested ? I shall take a view (it shall for the subject be a very short one) of what the assembly has done, with regard, first, to the constitution of the legislature ; in the next place, to that of the

executive power ; then to that of the judicature ; afterwards to the model of the army ; and conclude with the system of finance, to see whether we can discover in any part of their schemes the portentous ability, which may justify these bold undertakers in the superiority which they assume over mankind.

It is in the model of the sovereign and presiding part of this new republic, that we should expect their grand display. Here they were to prove their title to their proud demands. For the plan itself at large, and for the reasons on which it is grounded, I refer to the journals of the assembly of the 29th of September, 1789, and to the subsequent proceedings which have made any alterations in the plan. So far as in a matter somewhat confused I can see light, the system remains substantially as it has been originally framed. My few remarks will be such as regard its spirit, its tendency, and its fitness for framing a popular commonwealth, which they profess theirs to be, suited to the ends for which any commonwealth, and particularly such a commonwealth, is made. At the same time, I mean to consider its consistency with itself, and its own principles. 10 20

Old establishments are tried by their effects. If the people are happy, united, wealthy, and powerful, we presume the rest. We conclude that to be good from whence good is derived. In old establishments various correctives have been found for their aberrations from theory. Indeed they are the results of various necessities and expediences. They are not often constructed after any theory ; theories are rather drawn from them. In them we often see the end best obtained, where the means seem not perfectly reconcilable to what we may fancy was the original scheme. The means taught by experience may be better suited to political ends than those contrived in the original project. They again re-act upon the primitive constitution, and sometimes improve the design itself from which they seem to

have departed. I think all this might be curiously exemplified in the British constitution. At worst, the errors and deviations of every kind in reckoning are found and computed, and the ship proceeds in her course. This is the case of old establishments ; but in a new and merely theoretic system, it is expected that every contrivance shall appear, on the face of it, to answer its end ; especially where the projectors are no way embarrassed with an endeavour to accommodate the new building to an old one, 10 either in the walls or on the foundations.

The French builders, clearing away as mere rubbish whatever they found, and, like their ornamental gardeners, forming every thing into an exact level, propose to rest the whole local and general legislature on three bases of three different kinds ; one geometrical, one arithmetical, and the third financial ; the first of which they call the *basis of territory* ; the second, the *basis of population* ; and the third, the *basis of contribution*. For the accomplishment of the first of these purposes they divide the area of their country 20 into eighty-three pieces, regularly square, of eighteen leagues by eighteen. These large divisions are called *Departments*. These they portion, proceeding by square measurement, into seventeen hundred and twenty districts called *Communes*. These again they subdivide, still proceeding by square measurement, into smaller districts called *Cantons*, making in all 6,400.

At first view this geometrical basis of theirs presents not much to admire or to blame. It calls for no great legislative talents. Nothing more than an accurate land surveyor, 30 with his chain, sight, and theodolite, is requisite for such a plan as this. In the old divisions of the country various accidents at various times, and the ebb and flow of various properties and jurisdictions, settled their bounds. These bounds were not made upon any fixed system undoubtedly. They were subject to some inconveniencies ; but they were inconveniencies for which use had found remedies, and

habit had supplied accommodation and patience. In this new pavement of square within square, and this organisation and semiorganisation made on the system of Empedocles and Buffon, and not upon any politic principle, it is impossible that innumerable local inconveniencies, to which men are not habituated, must not arise. But these I pass over, because it requires an accurate knowledge of the country, which I do not possess, to specify them.

When these state surveyors came to take a view of their work of measurement, they soon found, that in politics, the 10 most fallacious of all things was geometrical demonstration. They had then recourse to another basis (or rather buttress) to support the building which tottered on that false foundation. It was evident, that the goodness of the soil, the number of the people, their wealth, and the largeness of their contribution, made such infinite variations between square and square as to render mensuration a ridiculous standard of power in the commonwealth, and equality in geometry the most unequal of all measures in the distribution of men. However, they could not give it up. But 20 dividing their political and civil representation into three parts, they allotted one of those parts to the square measurement, without a single fact or calculation to ascertain whether this territorial proportion of representation was fairly assigned, and ought upon any principle really to be a third. Having however given to geometry this portion (of a third for her dower) out of compliment I suppose to that sublime science, they left the other two to be scuffled for between the other parts, population and contribution.

When they came to provide for population, they were not 30 able to proceed quite so smoothly as they had done in the field of their geometry. Here their arithmetic came to bear upon their juridical metaphysics. Had they stuck to their metaphysic principles, the arithmetical process would be simple indeed. Men, with them, are strictly equal, and are entitled to equal rights in their own government., Each

head, on this system, would have its vote, and every man would vote directly for the person who was to represent him in the legislature. 'But soft—by regular degrees, not yet.' This metaphysic principle, to which law, custom, usage, policy, reason, were to yield, is to yield itself to their pleasure. There must be many degrees, and some stages, before the representative can come in contact with his constituent. Indeed, as we shall soon see, these two persons are to have no sort of communion with each other. First, 10 the voters in the *Canton*, who compose what they call *primary assemblies*, are to have a *qualification*. What! a qualification on the indefeasible rights of men? Yes; but it shall be a very small qualification. Our injustice shall be very little oppressive; only the local valuation of three days labour paid to the public. Why, this is not much, I readily admit, for any thing but the utter subversion of your equalising principle. As a qualification it might as well be let alone; for it answers no one purpose for which qualifications are established: and, on your ideas, it excludes from a 20 vote, the man of all others whose natural equality stands the most in need of protection and defence; I mean the man who has nothing else but his natural equality to guard him. You order him to buy the right, which you before told him nature had given to him gratuitously at his birth, and of which no authority on earth could lawfully deprive him. With regard to the person who cannot come up to your market, a tyrannous aristocracy, as against him, is established at the very outset, by you who pretend to be its sworn foe.

The gradation proceeds. These primary assemblies of 20 the *Canton* elect deputies to the *Commune*; one for every two hundred qualified inhabitants. Here is the first medium put between the primary elector and the representative legislator; and here a new turnpike is fixed for taxing the rights of men must a second qualification: for none can be elected into the *Commune* who does not pay the amount of ten days labour. Nor have we yet done. There is still to be another grada-



tion.\* These *Communes*, chosen by the *Canton*, choose to the *Department*; and the deputies of the *Department* choose their deputies to the *National Assembly*. Here is a third barrier of a senseless qualification. Every deputy to the national assembly must pay, in direct contribution, to the value of a *mark of silver*. Of all these qualifying barriers we must think alike; that they are impotent to secure independence; strong only to destroy the rights of men.

In all this process, which in its fundamental elements affects to consider only *population* upon a principle of natural right, there is a manifest attention to *property*; which, however just and reasonable on other schemes, is on theirs perfectly unsupportable.

When they come to their third basis, that of *Contribution*, we find that they have more completely lost sight of their rights of men. This last basis rests *entirely* on property. A principle totally different from the equality of men, and utterly irreconcilable to it, is thereby admitted; but no sooner is this principle admitted, than (as usual) it is subverted; and it is not subverted, (as we shall presently see,) 20 to approximate the inequality of riches to the level of nature. The additional share in the third portion of representation, (a portion reserved exclusively for the higher contribution,) is made to regard the *district* only, and not the individuals in it who pay. It is easy to perceive, by the course of their reasonings, how much they were embarrassed by their contradictory ideas of the rights of men and the privileges of riches. The committee of constitution do as good as admit that they are wholly irreconcilable. 'The relation, with

\* The assembly, in executing the plan of their committee, made some alterations. They have struck out one stage in these gradations; this removes a part of the objection: but the main objection, namely, that in their scheme the first constituent voter has no connection with the representative legislator, remains in all its force. There are other alterations, some possibly for the better, some certainly for the worse; but to the author the merit or demerit of these smaller alterations appears to be of no moment, where the scheme itself is fundamentally vicious and absurd.

regard to the contributions, is without doubt *null* (say they) when the question is on the balance of the political rights as between individual and individual ; without which *personal equality would be destroyed*, and an *aristocracy of the rich* would be established. But this inconvenience entirely disappears when the proportional relation of the contribution is only considered in the *great masses*, and is solely between province and province ; it serves in that case only to form a just reciprocal proportion between the cities, without affecting the personal rights of the citizens.'

Here the principle of *contribution*, as taken between man and man, is reprobated as *null*, and destructive to equality ; and as pernicious too ; because it leads to the establishment of an *aristocracy of the rich*. However, it must not be abandoned. And the way of getting rid of the difficulty is to establish the inequality as between department and department, leaving all the individuals in each department upon an exact par. Observe, that this parity between individuals had been before destroyed when the qualifications within the departments were settled ; nor does it seem a matter of great importance whether the equality of men be injured by masses or individually. An individual is not of the same importance in a mass represented by a few, as in a mass represented by many. It would be too much to tell a man jealous of his equality, that the elector has the same franchise who votes for three members as he who votes for ten.

Now take it in the other point of view, and let us suppose their principle of representation according to contribution, that is according to riches, to be well imagined, and to be a necessary basis for their republic. In this their third basis they assume, that riches ought to be respected, and that justice and policy require that they should entitle men, in some mode or other, to a larger share in the administration of public affairs ; it is now to be seen, how the assembly provides for the pre-eminence, or even for the security of the rich, by conferring, in virtue of their opulence, that

larger measure of power to their district which is denied to them personally. I readily admit (indeed I should lay it down as a fundamental principle) that in a republican government, which has a democratic basis, the rich do require an additional security above what is necessary to them in monarchies. They are subject to envy, and through envy to oppression. On the present scheme, it is impossible to divine what advantage they derive from the aristocratic preference upon which the unequal representation of the masses is founded. The rich cannot feel it, either as a support to dignity, or as security to fortune: for the aristocratic mass is generated from purely democratic principles; and the prevalence given to it in the general representation has no sort of reference to or connexion with the persons, upon account of whose property this superiority of the mass is established. If the contrivers of this scheme meant any sort of favour to the rich in consequence of their contribution, they ought to have conferred the privilege either on the individual rich, or on some class formed of rich persons (as historians represent Servius Tullius to have done in the early constitution of Rome); because the contest between the rich and the poor is not a struggle between corporation and corporation, but a contest between men and men; a competition not between districts but between descriptions. It would answer its purpose better if the scheme were inverted; that the votes of the masses were rendered equal; and that the votes within each mass were proportioned to property.

Let us suppose one man in a district (it is an easy supposition) to contribute as much as an hundred of his neighbours. Against these he has but one vote. If there were but one representative for the mass, his poor neighbours would outvote him by an hundred to one for that single representative. Bad enough. But amends are to be made him. How? The district, in virtue of his wealth, is to choose, say, ten members instead of one: that is to say, by

paying a very large contribution he has the happiness of being outvoted, an hundred to one, by the poor, for ten representatives, instead of being outvoted exactly in the same proportion for a single member. In truth, instead of benefiting by this superior quantity of representation, the rich man is subjected to an additional hardship. The increase of representation within his province sets up nine persons more, and as many more than nine as there may be democratic candidates, to cabal and intrigue, and to flatter the people at his expense and to his oppression. An interest is by this means held out to multitudes of the inferior sort, in obtaining a salary of eighteen livres a day (to them a vast object) besides the pleasure of a residence in Paris and their share in the government of the kingdom. The more the objects of ambition are multiplied and become democratic, just in that proportion the rich are endangered.

Thus it must fare between the poor and the rich in the province deemed aristocratic, which in its internal relation is the very reverse of that character. In its external relation, that is, its relation to the other provinces, I cannot see how the unequal representation, which is given to masses on account of wealth, becomes the means of preserving the equipoise and the tranquillity of the commonwealth. For if it be one of the objects to secure the weak from being crushed by the strong (as in all society undoubtedly it is) how are the smaller and poorer of these masses to be saved from the tyranny of the more wealthy? Is it by adding to the wealthy further and more systematical means of oppressing them? When we come to a balance of representation between corporate bodies, provincial interests, emulations, and jealousies are full as likely to arise among them as among individuals; and their divisions are likely to produce a much hotter spirit of dissension, and something leading much more nearly to a war.

I see that these aristocratic masses are made upon what is called the principle of direct contribution. Nothing can

be a more unequal standard than this. The indirect contribution, that which arises from duties on consumption, is in truth a better standard, and follows and discovers wealth more naturally than this of direct contribution. It is difficult indeed to fix a standard of local preference on account of the one, or of the other, or of both, because some provinces may pay the more of either or of both, on account of causes not intrinsic, but originating from those very districts over whom they have obtained a preference in consequence of their ostensible contribution. If the masses 10 were independent sovereign bodies, who were to provide for a federative treasury by distinct contingents, and that the revenue had not (as it has) many impositions running through the whole, which affect men individually, and not corporately, and which, by their nature, confound all territorial limits, something might be said for the basis of contribution as founded on masses. But of all things, this representation, to be measured by contribution, is the most difficult to settle upon principles of equity in a country, which considers its districts as members of an whole. For a 20 great city, such as Bourdeaux or Paris, appears to pay a vast body of duties, almost out of all assignable proportion to other places, and its mass is considered accordingly. But are these cities the true contributors in that proportion? No. The consumers of the commodities imported into Bourdeaux, who are scattered through all France, pay the import duties of Bourdeaux. The produce of the vintage in Guienne and Languedoc gives to that city the means of its contribution growing out of an export commerce. The landholders who spend their estates in Paris, and are thereby 30 the creators of that city, contribute for Paris from the provinces out of which their revenue arise. Very nearly the same arguments will apply to the representative share given on account of *direct* contribution : because the direct contribution must be assessed on wealth real or presumed ; and that local wealth will itself arise from causes not local, and

which therefore in equity ought not to produce a local preference.

It is very remarkable, that in this fundamental regulation, which settles the representation of the mass upon the direct contribution, they have not yet settled how that direct contribution shall be laid, and how apportioned. Perhaps there is some latent policy towards the continuance of the present assembly in this strange procedure. However, until they do this, they can have no certain constitution. It must  
 10 depend at last upon the system of taxation, and must vary with every variation in that system. As they have contrived matters, their taxation does not so much depend on their constitution, as their constitution on their taxation. This must introduce great confusion among the masses ; as the variable qualification for votes within the district must, if ever real contested elections take place, cause infinite internal controversies.

To compare together the three bases, not on their political reason, but on the ideas on which the assembly works, and  
 20 to try its consistency with itself, we cannot avoid observing, that the principle which the committee call the basis of *population*, does not begin to operate from the same point with the two other principles called the bases of *territory* and of *contribution*, which are both of an aristocratic nature. The consequence is, that where all three begin to operate together, there is the most absurd inequality produced by the operation of the former on the two latter principles. Every canton contains four square leagues, and is estimated to contain, on the average, 4,000 inhabitants, or 680 voters  
 30 in the *primary assemblies*, which vary in numbers with the population of the canton, and send *one deputy* to the *commune* for every 200 voters. *Nine cantons* make a *commune*.

Now let us take a *canton* containing a *sea-port town of trade*, or a *great manufacturing town*. Let us suppose the population of this canton to be 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193

voters, forming *three primary assemblies*, and sending *ten deputies* to the *commune*.

Oppose to ~~this~~ *one* *canton* *two* others of the remaining eight in the same *commune*. These we may suppose to have their fair population of 4,000 inhabitants, and 680 voters each, or 8,000 inhabitants and 1,360 voters, both together. These will form only *two primary assemblies*, and send only *six* deputies to the *commune*.

When the assembly of the *commune* comes to vote on the *basis of territory*, which principle is first admitted to operate 10 in that assembly, the *single canton* which has *half* the territory of the *other two*, will have *ten* voices to *six* in the election of *three deputies* to the assembly of the department, chosen on the express ground of a representation of territory.

This inequality, striking as it is, will be yet highly aggravated, if we suppose, as we fairly may, the *several* other cantons of the *commune* to fall proportionably short of the average population, as much as the *principal canton* exceeds it. Now, as to the *basis of contribution*, which also 20 is a principle admitted first to operate in the assembly of the *commune*. Let us again take *one* *canton*, such as is stated above. If the whole of the direct contributions paid by a great trading or manufacturing town be divided equally among the inhabitants, each individual will be found to pay much more than an individual living in the country according to the same average. The whole paid by the inhabitants of the former will be more than the whole paid by the inhabitants of the latter—we may fairly assume one third more. Then the 12,700 inhabitants, or 2,193 voters of the 30 *canton* will pay as much as 19,050 inhabitants, or 3,289 voters of the *other cantons*, which are nearly the estimated proportion of inhabitants and voters of *five* other cantons. Now the 2,193 voters will, as I before said, send only *ten* deputies to the assembly; the 3,289 voters will send *sixteen*. Thus, for an *equal* share in the contribution of the whole

*commune*, there will be a difference of sixteen voices <sup>represent</sup> in voting for deputies to be chosen on the principle of representing the general contribution of the whole *commune*,

By the same mode of computation we shall find direct inhabitants, or 2,741 voters of the *other cantons* direct one-sixth LESS to the contribution of the whole <sup>perhaps</sup> have three voices MORE than the 12,700 inhabitants <sup>of</sup> the *one canton*.

Such is the fantastical and unjust inequality between mass  
10 and mass, in this curious repartition of the rights of representation arising out of *territory* and *contribution*. The qualifications which these confer are in truth negative qualifications, that give a right in an inverse proportion to the possession of them.

In this whole contrivance of the three bases, consider it in any light you please, I do not see a variety of objects, reconciled in one consistent whole, but several contradictory principles reluctantly and irreconcilably brought and held together by your philosophers, like wild beasts shut up in a  
20 cage, to claw and bite each other to their mutual destruction.

I am afraid I have gone too far into their way of considering the formation of a constitution. They have much, but bad, metaphysics ; much, but bad, geometry ; much, but false, proportionate arithmetic ; but if it were all as exact as metaphysics, geometry, and arithmetic ought to be, and if their schemes were perfectly consistent in all their parts, it would make only a more fair and slightly vision. It is remarkable, that in a great arrangement of mankind, not one  
30 reference whatsoever is to be found to any thing moral or any thing politic ; nothing that relates to the concerns, the actions, the passions, the interests of men. *Hominem non sapiunt.* [*They do not savour of man.*]

You see I only consider this constitution as electoral, and leading by steps to the National Assembly. I do not enter into the internal government of the Departments, and their



genealogy through the Communes and Cantons. These local governments are, in the original plan, to be as nearly as possible composed in the same manner and on the same principles with the elective assemblies. They are each of them bodies perfectly compact and rounded in themselves.

You cannot but perceive in this scheme, that it has a direct and immediate tendency to sever France into a variety of republics, and to render them totally independent of each other, without any direct constitutional means of coherence, connection, or subordination, except what may 10 be derived from their acquiescence in the determinations of the general congress of the ambassadors from each independent republic. Such in reality is the National Assembly, and such governments I admit do exist in the world, though in forms infinitely more suitable to the local and habitual circumstances of their people. But such associations, rather than bodies politic, have generally been the effect of necessity, not choice ; and I believe the present French power is the very first body of citizens, who, having obtained full authority to do with their country what they pleased, have 20 chosen to dis sever it in this barbarous manner.

It is impossible not to observe, that in the spirit of this geometrical distribution, and arithmetical arrangement, these pretended citizens treat France exactly like a country of conquest. Acting as conquerors, they have imitated the policy of the harshest of that harsh race. The policy of such barbarous victors, who condemn a subdued people, and insult their feelings, has ever been, as much as in them lay, to destroy all vestiges of the ancient country, in religion, in polity, in laws, and in manners ; to confound all territorial 30 limits ; to produce a general poverty ; to put up their properties to auction ; to crush their princes, nobles, and pontiffs ; to lay low every thing which had lifted its head above the level, or which could serve to combine or rally, in their distresses, the disbanded people, under the standard of old opinion. They have made France free in the manner in

which those sincere friends to the rights of mankind, the Romans, freed Greece, Macedon, and other nations. They destroyed the bonds of their union, under colour of providing for the independence of each of their cities.

When the members who compose these new bodies of cantons, communes, and departments, arrangements purposely produced through the medium of confusion, begin to act, they will find themselves, in a great measure, strangers to one another. The electors and elected throughout, especially in the rural *cantons*, will be frequently without any civil habitudes or connections, or any of that natural discipline which is the soul of a true republic. Magistrates and collectors of revenue are now no longer acquainted with their districts, bishops with their dioceses, or curates with their parishes. These new colonies of the rights of men bear a strong resemblance to that sort of military colonies which Tacitus has observed upon in the declining policy of Rome. In better and wiser days (whatever course they took with foreign nations) they were careful to make the elements of a methodical subordination and settlement to be coeval ; and even to lay the foundations of civil discipline in the military.\* But, when all the good arts had fallen into ruin, they proceeded, as your assembly does, upon the equality of men, and with as little judgment, and as little care for those things which make a republic tolerable or durable. But in this, as well as almost every instance, your new common-

\* Non, ut olim, universæ legiones deducebantur cum tribunis, et centurionibus, et sui cujusque ordinis militibus, ut consensu et caritate rempublicam afficerent ; sed ignoti inter se, diversis manipulis, sine rectore, sine affectibus mutuis, quasi ex alio genere mortalium, repente in unum collecti, numerus magis quam colonia. Tac. Annal. l. 14. sect. 27. [Whole legions were no longer transplanted, as in former days, with tribunes and centurions and soldiers of every grade, so as to form a state by their unity and mutual attachment, but strangers to one another from different companies, without a head or any community of sentiment, were suddenly gathered together, as it might be out of any other class of human beings, and became a mere crowd rather than a colony.] All this will be still more applicable to the unconnected, rotary, biennial national assemblies, in this absurd and senseless constitution.

wealth is born, and bred, and fed, in those corruptions which mark degenerated and worn out republics. Your child comes into the world with the symptoms of death; the *facies Hippocratica* forms the character of its physiognomy, and the prognostic of its fate.

The legislators who framed the ancient republics knew that their business was too arduous to be accomplished with no better apparatus than the metaphysics of an undergraduate, and the mathematics and arithmetic of an exciseman. They had to do with men, and they were obliged to study human nature. They had to do with citizens, and they were obliged to study the effects of those habits which are communicated by the circumstances of civil life. They were sensible that the operation of this second nature on the first produced a new combination; and thence arose many diversities amongst men, according to their birth, their education, their professions, the periods of their lives, their residence in towns or in the country, their several ways of acquiring and of fixing property, and according to the quality of the property itself, all which rendered them as it were so many different species of animals. From hence they thought themselves obliged to dispose their citizens into such classes, and to place them in such situations in the state as their peculiar habits might qualify them to fill, and to allot to them such appropriated privileges as might secure to them what their specific occasions required, and which might furnish to each description such force as might protect it in the conflict caused by the diversity of interests, that must exist, and must contend in all complex society: for the legislator would have been ashamed, that the coarse husbandman should well know how to assort and to use his sheep, horses, and oxen, and should have enough of common sense not to abstract and equalize them all into animals, without providing for each kind an appropriate food, care, and employment; whilst he, the economist, disposer, and shepherd of his own kindred, subliming himself into an

airy metaphysician, was resolved to know nothing of his flocks, but as men in general. It is for this reason that Montesquieu observed very justly, that in their classification of the citizens, the great legislators of antiquity made the greatest display of their powers, and even soared above themselves. It is here that your modern legislators have gone deep into the negative series, and sunk even below their own nothing. As the first sort of legislators attended to the different kinds of citizens, and combined them into  
 10 one commonwealth, the others, the metaphysical and alchemical legislators, have taken the direct contrary course. They have attempted to confound all sorts of citizens, as well as they could, into one homogeneous mass ; and then they divided this their amalgama into a number of incoherent republics. They reduce men to loose counters merely for the sake of simple telling, and not to figures whose power is to arise from their place in the table. The elements of their own metaphysics might have taught them better lessons. The troll of their categorical table might have  
 20 informed them that there was something else in the intellectual world besides *substance* and *quantity*. They might learn from the catechism of metaphysics that there were eight heads more,\* in every complex deliberation, which they have never thought of, though these, of all the ten, are the subject on which the skill of man can operate any thing at all.

So far from this able disposition of some of the old republican legislators, which follows with a solicitous accuracy, the moral conditions and propensities of men, they  
 30 have levelled and crushed together all the orders which they found, even under the coarse unartificial arrangement of the monarchy, in which mode of government the classing of the citizens is not of so much importance as in a republic. It is true, however, that every such classification, if properly

\* Qualitas, Relatio, Actio, Passio, Ubi, Quando, Situs, Habitus.  
 [Quality, Relation, Action, Passion, Place, Time, Position, State.]

ordered, is good in all forms of government; and composes a strong barrier against the excesses of despotism, as well as it is the necessary means of giving effect and permanence to a republic. For want of something of this kind, if the present project of a republic should fail, all securities to a moderated freedom fall along with it; all the indirect restraints which mitigate despotism are removed; insomuch that if monarchy should ever again obtain an entire ascendancy in France, under this or under any other dynasty, it will probably be, if not voluntarily tempered at setting out, 10 by the wise and virtuous counsels of the prince, the most completely arbitrary power that has ever appeared on earth. This is to play a most desperate game.

The confusion, which attends on all such proceedings, they even declare to be one of their objects, and they hope to secure their constitution by a terror of a return of those evils which attended their making of it. 'By this,' say they, 'its destruction will become difficult to authority, which cannot break it up without the entire disorganization of the whole state.' They presume, that if this authority should 20 ever come to the same degree of power that they have acquired, it would make a more moderate and chastised use of it, and would piously tremble entirely to disorganise the state in the savage manner that they have done. They expect, from the virtues of returning despotism, the security which is to be enjoyed by the offspring of their popular vices.

I wish, Sir, that you and my readers would give an attentive perusal to the work of M. de Calonne, on this subject. It is indeed not only an eloquent but an able and 30 instructive performance. I confine myself to what he says relative to the constitution of the new state, and to the condition of the revenue. As to the disputes of this minister with his rivals, I do not wish to pronounce upon them. As little do I mean to hazard any opinion concerning his ways and means, financial or political, for taking his

country out of its present disgraceful and deplorable situation of servitude, anarchy, bankruptcy, and beggary. I cannot speculate quite so sanguinely as he does : but he is a Frenchman, and has a closer duty relative to those objects, and better means of judging of them, than I can have. I wish that the formal avowal which he refers to, made by one of the principal leaders in the assembly, concerning the tendency of their scheme to bring France not only from a monarchy to a republic, but from a republic to a mere  
10 confederacy, may be very particularly attended to. It adds new force to my observations ; and indeed M. de Calonne's work supplies my deficiencies by many new and striking arguments on most of the subjects of this Letter.\*

It is this resolution, to break their country into separate republics, which has driven them into the greatest number of their difficulties and contradictions. If it were not for this, all the questions of exact equality, and these balances, never to be settled, of individual rights, population, and contribution, would be wholly useless. The representation,  
20 though derived from parts, would be a duty which equally regarded the whole. Each deputy to the assembly would be the representative of France, and of all its descriptions, of the many and of the few, of the rich and of the poor, of the great districts and of the small. All these districts would themselves be subordinate to some standing authority, existing independently of them ; an authority in which their representation, and every thing that belongs to it, originated, and to which it was pointed. This standing, unalterable, fundamental government would make, and it is  
30 the only thing which could make, that territory truly and properly an whole. With us, when we elect popular representatives, we send them to a council, in which each man individually is a subject, and submitted to a government complete in all its ordinary functions. With you the elective assembly is the sovereign, and the sole sovereign :

\* See *L'Etat de la France*, p. 363.

all the members are therefore integral parts of this sole sovereignty. But with us it is totally different. With us the representative, separated from the other parts, can have no action and no existence. The government is the point of reference of the several members and districts of our representation. This is the centre of our unity. This government of reference is a trustee for the *whole*, and not for the parts. So is the other branch of our public council, I mean the house of lords. With us the king and the lords are several and joint securities for the equality of each district, 10 each province, each city. When did you hear in Great Britain of any province suffering from the inequality of its representation ; what district from having no representation at all ? Not only our monarchy and our peerage secure the equality on which our unity depends, but it is the spirit of the house of commons itself. The very inequality of representation, which is so foolishly complained of, is perhaps the very thing which prevents us from thinking or acting as members for districts. Cornwall elects as many members as all Scotland. But is Cornwall better taken care 20 of than Scotland ? Few trouble their heads about any of your bases, out of some giddy clubs. Most of those, who wish for any change, upon any plausible grounds, desire it on different ideas.

Your new constitution is the very reverse of ours in its principle ; and I am astonished how any persons could dream of holding out any thing done in it as an example for Great Britain. With you there is little, or rather no, connection between the last representative and the first constituent. The member who goes to the national assembly is 30 not chosen by the people, nor accountable to them. There are three elections before he is chosen : two sets of magistracy intervene between him and the primary assembly, so as to render him, as I have said, an ambassador of a state, and not the representative of the people within a state. By this the whole spirit of the election is changed ;

nor can any corrective your constitution-mongers have devised render him any thing else than what he is. The very attempt to do it would inevitably introduce a confusion, if possible, more horrid than the present. There is no way to make a connection between the original constituent and the representative, but by the circuitous means which may lead the candidate to apply in the first instance to the primary electors, in order that by their authoritative instructions (and something more  
10 perhaps) these primary electors may force the two succeeding bodies of electors to make a choice agreeable to their wishes. But this would plainly subvert the whole scheme. It would be to plunge them back into that tumult and confusion of popular election, which, by their interposed gradation of elections, they mean to avoid, and at length to risk the whole fortune of the state with those who have the least knowledge of it, and the least interest in it. This is a perpetual dilemma, into which they are thrown by the vicious, weak, and contradictory principles they have chosen. Unless the  
20 people break up and level this gradation, it is plain that they do not at all substantially elect to the assembly; indeed they elect as little in appearance as reality.

What is it we all seek for in an election? To answer its real purposes, you must first possess the means of knowing the fitness of your man; and then you must retain some hold upon him by personal obligation or dependence. For what end are these primary electors complimented, or rather mocked, with a choice? They can never know anything of the qualities of him that is to serve them, nor has he any obligation  
30 whatsoever to them. Of all the powers unfit to be delegated by those who have any real means of judging, that most peculiarly unfit is what relates to a *personal* choice. In case of abuse, that body of primary electors never can call the representative to an account for his conduct. He is too far removed from them in the chain of representation. If he acts improperly at the end of his two years' lease, it does not



concern him for two years more. By the new French constitution, the best and the wisest representatives go equally with the worst into this *Limbus Patrum*. Their bottoms are supposed foul, and they must go into dock to be refitted. Every man who has served in an assembly is ineligible for two years after. Just as the magistrates begin to learn their trade, like chimney-sweepers, they are disqualified for exercising it. Superficial, new, petulant acquisition, and interrupted, dronish, broken, ill recollection, is to be the destined character of all your future governors. Your constitution has too much of jealousy to have much of sense in it. You consider the breach of trust in the representative so principally, that you do not at all regard the question of his fitness to execute it.

This purgatory interval is not unfavourable to a faithless representative, who may be as good a canvasser as he was a bad governor. In this time he may cabal himself into a superiority over the wisest and most virtuous. As, in the end, all the members of this elective constitution are equally fugitive, and exist only for the election, they may be no longer the same persons who had chosen him, to whom he is to be responsible when he solicits for a renewal of his trust. To call all the secondary electors of the *Commune* to account, is ridiculous, impracticable, and unjust; they may themselves have been deceived in their choice, as the third set of electors, those of the *Department*, may be in theirs. In your elections responsibility cannot exist.

Finding no sort of principle of coherence with each other in the nature and constitution of the several new republics of France, I considered what cement the legislators had provided for them from any extraneous materials. Their confederations, their *spectacles*, their civic feasts, and their enthusiasm, I take no notice of; they are nothing but mere tricks; but tracing their policy through their actions, I think I can distinguish the arrangements by which they propose to hold these republics together. The first, is the *confiscation*,

with the compulsory paper currency annexed to it; the second, is the supreme power of the city of Paris; the third, is the general army of the state. Of this last I shall reserve what I have to say, until I come to consider the army as an head by itself.

As to the operation of the first (the confiscation and paper currency) merely as a cement, I cannot deny that these, the one depending on the other, may for some time compose some sort of cement, if their madness and folly in the management, 10 and in the tempering of the parts together, does not produce a repulsion in the very outset. But allowing to the scheme some coherence and some duration, it appears to me, that if, after a while, the confiscation should not be found sufficient to support the paper coinage (as I am morally certain it will not) then, instead of cementing, it will add infinitely to the dissociation, distraction, and confusion of these confederate republics, both with relation to each other, and to the several parts within themselves. But if the confiscation should so far succeed as to sink the paper currency, the cement is gone with the cir- 20 culation. In the mean time its binding force will be very uncertain, and it will straiten or relax with every variation in the credit of the paper.

One thing only is certain in this scheme, which is an effect seemingly collateral, but direct, I have no doubt, in the minds of those who conduct this business, that is, its effect in producing an *Oligarchy* in every one of the republics. A paper circulation, not founded on any real money deposited or engaged for, amounting already to four-and-forty millions of English money, and this currency by force substituted in the 30 place of the coin of the kingdom, becoming thereby the substance of its revenue, as well as the medium of all its commercial and civil intercourse, must put the whole of what power, authority, and influence is left, in any form whatsoever it may assume, into the hands of the managers and conductors of this circulation.

In England we feel the influence of the bank; though it is

only the centre of a voluntary dealing. He knows little indeed of the influence of money upon mankind, who does not see the force of the management of a monied concern which is so much more extensive, and in its nature so much more depending on the managers than any of ours. But this is not merely a money concern. There is another member in the system inseparably connected with this money management. It consists in the means of drawing out at discretion portions of the confiscated land for sale ; and carrying on a process of continual transmutation of paper into land, and land into 10 paper. When we follow this process in its effects, we may conceive something of the intensity of the force with which this system must operate. By this means the spirit of money-jobbing and speculation goes into the mass of land itself, and incorporates with it. By this kind of operation, that species of property becomes (as it were) volatilized ; it assumes an unnatural and monstrous activity, and thereby throws into the hands of the several managers, principal and subordinate, Parisian and provincial, all the representative of money, and perhaps a full tenth part of all the land in France, which has 20 now acquired the worst and most pernicious part of the evil of a paper circulation, the greatest possible uncertainty in its value. They have reversed the Latonian kindness to the landed property of Delos. They have sent theirs to be blown about, like the light fragments of a wreck, *oras et littora circum* [around the coasts and shores].

The new dealers being all habitually adventurers, and without any fixed habits and local predilections, will purchase to job out again, as the market of paper, or of money, or of land, shall present an advantage. For though an holy bishop 30 thinks that agriculture will derive great advantages from the 'enlightened' usurers who are to purchase the church confiscations, I, who am not a good, but an old farmer, with great humility beg leave to tell his late lordship, that usury is not a tutor of agriculture ; and if the word 'enlightened' be understood according to the new dictionary,

as it always is in your new schools, I cannot conceive how a man's not believing in God can teach him to cultivate the earth with the least of any additional skill or encouragement. 'Diis immortalibus sero' [*I sow for the immortal gods*], said an old Roman, when he held one handle of the plough, whilst death held the other. Though you were to join in the commission all the directors of the two academies to the directors of the *Caisse d'Escompte*, one old experienced peasant is worth them all. I have got more information, 10 upon a curious and interesting branch of husbandry, in one short conversation with a Carthusian monk, than I have derived from all the Bank directors that I have ever conversed with. However, there is no cause for apprehension from the meddling of money-dealers with rural economy. These gentlemen are too wise in their generation. At first, perhaps, their tender and susceptible imaginations may be captivated with the innocent and unprofitable delights of a pastoral life; but in a little time they will find that agriculture is a trade much more laborious, and much less 20 lucrative than that which they had left. After making its panegyric, they will turn their backs on it like their great precursor and prototype. They may, like him, begin by singing, '*Beatus ille*' [*Happy is the man*],—but what will be the end?

*Hæc ubi locutus fœnerator Alphius,  
Jam jam futurus rusticus  
Omnem redegit idibus pecuniam,  
Quærit calendis ponere.*

[Thus said the usurer Alphius, and all moneys  
30 Lent till the mid-month at that date calls in,  
And, hot for rural pleasures, that day fortnight  
Our would-be farmer—lends them out again.]

They will cultivate the *Caisse d'Église*, under the sacred auspices of this prelate, with much more profit than its vineyards and its corn-fields. They will employ their talents according to their habits and their interests. They will not

follow the plough whilst they can direct treasuries, and govern provinces.

Your legislators, in everything new, are the very first who have founded a commonwealth upon gaming, and infused this spirit into it as its vital breath. The great object in these politics is to metamorphose France from a great kingdom into one great play-table ; to turn its inhabitants into a nation of gamblers ; to make speculation as extensive as life ; to mix it with all its concerns ; and to divert the whole of the hopes and fears of the people from their useful channels, into the impulses, passions, and superstitions of those who live on chances. They loudly proclaim their opinion, that this their present system of a republic cannot possibly exist without this kind of gaming fund ; and that the very thread of its life is spun out of the staple of these speculations. The old gaming in funds was mischievous enough undoubtedly ; but it was so only to individuals. Even when it had its greatest extent, in the Mississippi and South Sea, it affected but few, comparatively ; where it extends further, as in lotteries, the spirit has but a single object. But where the law, which in most circumstances forbids, and in none countenances gaming, is itself debauched, so as to reverse its nature and policy, and expressly to force the subject to this destructive table, by bringing the spirit and symbols of gaming into the minutest matters, and engaging every body in it, and in every thing, a more dreadful epidemic distemper of that kind is spread than yet has appeared in the world. With you a man can neither earn nor buy his dinner, without a speculation. What he receives in the morning will not have the same value at night. What he is compelled to take as pay for an old debt, will not be received as the same when he comes to pay a debt contracted by himself ; nor will it be the same when by prompt payment he would avoid contracting any debt at all. Industry must wither away. Economy must be driven from your country. Careful provision will have no existence. Who

will labour without knowing the amount of his pay? Who will study to increase what none can estimate? who will accumulate, when he does not know the value of what he saves? If you abstract it from its uses in gaming, to accumulate your paper wealth, would be not the providence of a man, but the distempered instinct of a jackdaw.

The truly melancholy part of the policy of systematically making a nation of gamblers is this; that though all are forced to play, few can understand the game; and fewer 10 still are in a condition to avail themselves of the knowledge. The many must be the dupes of the few who conduct the machine of these speculations. What effect it must have on the country-people is visible. The townsman can calculate from day to day: not so the inhabitant of the country. When the peasant first brings his corn to market, the magistrate in the town obliges him to take the assignat at par; when he goes to the shop with this money, he finds it seven per cent. the worse for crossing the way. This market he will not readily resort to again. The towns-people will 20 be inflamed! they will force the country-people to bring their corn. Resistance will begin, and the murders of Paris and St. Denis may be renewed through all France.

What signifies the empty compliment paid to the country by giving it perhaps more than its share in the theory of your representation? Where have you placed the real power over monied and landed circulation? Where have you placed the means of raising and falling the value of every man's freehold? Those whose operations can take from, or add ten per cent. to, the possessions of every man 30 in France, must be the masters of every man in France. The whole of the power obtained by this revolution will settle in the towns among the burghers, and the monied directors who lead them. The landed gentleman, the yeoman, and the peasant have, none of them, habits, or inclinations, or experience, which can lead them to any share in this the sole source of power and influence now left in

France. The very nature of a country life, the very nature of landed property, in all the occupations, and all the pleasures they afford, render combination and arrangement (the sole way of procuring and exerting influence) in a manner impossible amongst country-people. Combine them by all the art you can, and all the industry, they are always dissolving into individuality. Any thing in the nature of incorporation is almost impracticable amongst them. Hope, fear, alarm, jealousy, the ephemeral tale that does its business and dies in a day, all these things, which are the reins and spurs by which leaders check or urge the minds of followers, are not easily employed, or hardly at all, amongst scattered people. They assemble, they arm, they act with the utmost difficulty, and at the greatest charge. Their efforts, if ever they can be commenced, cannot be sustained. They cannot proceed systematically. If the country gentlemen attempt an influence through the mere income of their property, what is it to that of those who have ten times their income to sell, and who can ruin their property by bringing their plunder to meet it at market? If the landed man wishes to mortgage, he falls the value of his land, and raises the value of assignats. He augments the power of his enemy by the very means he must take to contend with him. The country gentleman therefore, the officer by sea and land, the man of liberal views and habits, attached to no profession, will be as completely excluded from the government of his country as if he were legislatively proscribed. It is obvious, that in the towns, all the things which conspire against the country gentleman, combine in favour of the money manager and director. In towns combination is natural. The habits of burghers, their occupations, their diversion, their business, their idleness, continually bring them into mutual contact. Their virtues and their vices are sociable; they are always in garrison; and they come embodied and half-disciplined into the hands of those who mean to form them for civil, or for military action.

All these considerations leave no doubt on my mind, that if this monster of a constitution can continue, France will be wholly governed by the agitators in corporations, by societies in the towns formed of directors of assignats, and trustees for the sale of church lands, attornies, agents, money-jobbers, speculators, and adventurers, composing an ignoble oligarchy founded on the destruction of the crown, the church, the nobility, and the people. Here end all the deceitful dreams and visions of the equality and rights of men. In the  
 10 'Serbonian bog' of this base oligarchy they are all absorbed, sunk, and lost for ever.

Though human eyes cannot trace them, one would be tempted to think some great offences in France must cry to heaven, which has thought fit to punish it with a subjection to a vile and inglorious domination, in which no comfort or compensation is to be found in any, even of those false splendours, which, playing about other tyrannies, prevent mankind from feeling themselves dishonoured even whilst they are oppressed. I must confess I am touched with a sorrow, mixed  
 20 with some indignation, at the conduct of a few men, once of great rank, and still of great character, who, deluded with specious names, have engaged in a business too deep for the line of their understanding to fathom; who have lent their fair reputation, and the authority of their high-sounding names, to the designs of men with whom they could not be acquainted; and have thereby made their very virtues operate to the ruin of their country.

So far as to the first cementing principle.

The second material of cement for their new republic is the  
 30 superiority of the city of Paris; and this I admit is strongly connected with the other cementing principle of paper circulation and confiscation. It is in this part of the project we must look for the cause of the destruction of all the old bounds of provinces and jurisdictions, ecclesiastical and secular, and the dissolution of all ancient combinations of things, as well as the formation of so many small unconnected



republics. The power of the city of Paris is evidently one great spring of all their politics. It is through the power of Paris, now become the centre and focus of jobbing, that the leaders of this faction direct, or rather command the whole legislative and the whole executive government. Every thing therefore must be done which can confirm the authority of that city over the other republics. Paris is compact; she has an enormous strength, wholly disproportioned to the force of any of the square republics; and this strength is collected and condensed within a narrow compass. Paris has 10 a natural and easy connexion of its parts, which will not be affected by any scheme of a geometrical constitution, nor does it much signify whether its proportion of representation be more or less, since it has the whole draft of fishes in its dragnet. The other divisions of the kingdom being hackled and torn to pieces, and separated from all their habitual means, and even principles of union, cannot, for some time at least, confederate against her. Nothing was to be left in all the subordinate members, but weakness, disconnection, and confusion. To confirm this part of the plan, the assembly has 20 lately come to a resolution, that no two of their republics shall have the same commander in chief.

To a person who takes a view of the whole, the strength of Paris thus formed, will appear a system of general weakness. It is boasted, that the geometrical policy has been adopted, that all local ideas should be sunk, and that the people should no longer be Gascons, Picards, Bretons, Normans, but Frenchmen, with one country, one heart, and one assembly. But instead of being all Frenchmen, the greater likelihood is, that the inhabitants of that region will shortly have no country. 30 No man ever was attached by a sense of pride, partiality, or real affection, to a description of square measurement. He never will glory in belonging to the Checquer, No. 71, or to any other badge-ticket. We begin our public affections in our families. No cold relation is a zealous citizen. We pass on to our neighbourhoods, and our habitual provincial con-

nections. These are inns and resting places. Such divisions of our country as have been formed by habit, and not by a sudden jerk of authority, were so many little images of the great country in which the heart found something which it could fill. The love to the whole is not extinguished by this subordinate partiality. Perhaps it is a sort of elemental training to those higher and more large regards, by which alone men come to be affected, as with their own concern, in the prosperity of a kingdom so extensive as that of France.

- 10 In that general territory itself, as in the old name of provinces, the citizens are interested from old prejudices and unreasoned habits, and not on account of the geometric properties of its figure. The power and pre-eminence of Paris does certainly press down and hold these republics together, as long as it lasts. But for the reasons I have already given you, I think it cannot last very long.

- Passing from the civil creating, and the civil cementing principles of this constitution, to the national assembly, which is to appear and act as sovereign, we see a body in its constitution with every possible power, and no possible external control. We see a body without fundamental laws, without established maxims, without respected rules of proceeding, which nothing can keep firm to any system whatsoever. Their idea of their powers is always taken at the utmost stretch of legislative competency, and their examples for common cases, from the exceptions of the most urgent necessity. The future is to be in most respects like the present assembly; but, by the mode of the new elections and the tendency of the new circulations, it will be purged of the small
- 20 degree of internal control existing in a minority chosen originally from various interests, and preserving something of their spirit. If possible, the next assembly must be worse than the present. The present, by destroying and altering every thing, will leave to their successors apparently nothing popular to do. They will be roused by emulation and example to enterprises the boldest and the most absurd. To
- 30

suppose such an assembly sitting in perfect quietude is ridiculous.

Your all-sufficient legislators, in their hurry to do every thing at once, have forgot one thing that seems essential, and which, I believe, never has been before, in the theory or the practice, omitted by any projector of a republic. They have forgot to constitute a *Senate*, or something of that nature and character. Never, before this time, was heard of a body politic composed of one legislative and active assembly, and its executive officers, without such a council; without something to which foreign states might connect themselves; something to which, in the ordinary detail of government, the people could look up; something which might give a bias and steadiness and preserve something like consistency in the proceedings of state. Such a body kings generally have as a council. A monarchy may exist without it; but it seems to be in the very essence of a republican government. It holds a sort of middle place between the supreme power exercised by the people, or immediately delegated from them, and the mere executive. Of this there are no traces in your constitution; and in providing nothing of this kind, your Solons and Numas have, as much as in any thing else, discovered a sovereign incapacity.

LET us now turn our eyes to what they have done towards the formation of an executive power. For this they have chosen a degraded king. This their first executive officer is to be a machine, without any sort of deliberative discretion in any one act of his function. At best he is but a channel to convey to the national assembly such matter as may import that body to know. If he had been made the exclusive channel, the power would not have been without its importance; though infinitely perilous to those who would choose to exercise it. But public intelligence and statement of facts may pass to the assembly, with equal authenticity, through any other conveyance. As to the means, therefore,

of giving a direction to measures by the statement of an authorized reporter, this office of intelligence is as nothing.

To consider the French scheme of an executive officer in its two natural divisions of civil and political—In the first it must be observed, that, according to the new constitution, the higher parts of judicature, in either of its lines, are not in the king. The king of France is not the fountain of justice. The judges, neither the original nor the appellate, are of his nomination. He neither proposes the candidates, 10 nor has a negative on the choice. He is not even the public prosecutor. He serves only as a notary to authenticate the choice made of the judges in the several districts. By his officers he is to execute their sentence. When we look into the true nature of his authority, he appears to be nothing more than a chief of bumbailiffs, serjeants at mace, catchpoles, jailers, and hangmen. It is impossible to place any thing called royalty in a more degrading point of view. A thousand times better it had been for the dignity of this unhappy prince, that he had nothing at all to do with the 20 administration of justice, deprived as he is of all that is venerable, and all that is consolatory in that function, without power of originating any process; without a power of suspension, mitigation, or pardon. Every thing in justice that is vile and odious is thrown upon him. It was not for nothing that the assembly has been at such pains to remove the stigma from certain offices, when they were resolved to place the person who lately had been their king in a situation but one degree above the executioner, and in an office nearly of the same quality. It is not in nature, that situated 30 as the king of the French now is, he can respect himself, or can be respected by others.

View this new executive officer on the side of his political capacity, as he acts under the orders of the national assembly. To execute laws is a royal office; to execute orders is not to be a king. However, a political executive magistracy, though merely such, is a great trust. It is a

trust indeed that has much depending upon its faithful and diligent performance, both in the person presiding in it and in all his subordinates. Means of performing this duty ought to be given by regulation ; and dispositions towards it ought to be infused by the circumstances attendant on the trust. It ought to be environed with dignity, authority, and consideration, and it ought to lead to glory. The office of execution is an office of exertion. It is not from impotence we are to expect the tasks of power. What sort of person is a king to command executory service, who has no means 10 whatsoever to reward it? Not in a permanent office ; not in a grant of land ; no, not in a pension of fifty pounds a year ; not in the vainest and most trivial title. In France the king is no more the fountain of honour than he is the fountain of justice. All rewards, all distinctions are in other hands. Those who serve the king can be actuated by no natural motive but fear ; by a fear of every thing except their master. His functions of internal coercion are as odious, as those which he exercises in the department of justice. If relief is to be given to any municipality, the 20 assembly gives it. If troops are to be sent to reduce them to obedience to the assembly, the king is to execute the order ; and upon every occasion he is to be spattered over with the blood of his people. He has no negative ; yet his name and authority is used to enforce every harsh decree. Nay, he must concur in the butchery of those who shall attempt to free him from his imprisonment, or shew the slightest attachment to his person or to his ancient authority.

Executive magistracy ought to be constituted in such a manner, that those who compose it should be disposed to 30 love and to venerate those whom they are bound to obey. A purposed neglect, or, what is worse, a literal but perverse and malignant obedience, must be the ruin of the wisest counsels. In vain will the law attempt to anticipate or to follow such studied neglects and fraudulent attentions. To make men act zealously is not in the competence of law.

Kings, even such as are truly kings, may and ought to bear the freedom of subjects that are obnoxious to them. They may too, without derogating from themselves, bear even the authority of such persons if it promotes their service. Louis the XIIIth mortally hated the cardinal de Richlieu ; but his support of that minister against his rivals was the source of all the glory of his reign, and the solid foundation of his throne itself. Louis the XIVth, when come to the throne, did not love the cardinal Mazarin ; but for his interests he  
10 preserved him in power. When old, he detested Louvois ; but for years, whilst he faithfully served his greatness, he endured his person. When George the II<sup>d</sup> took Mr. Pitt, who certainly was not agreeable to him, into his councils, he did nothing which could humble a wise sovereign. But these ministers, who were chosen by affairs, not by affections, acted in the name of, and in trust for, kings ; and not as their avowed, constitutional, and ostensible masters. I think it impossible that any king, when he has recovered his first terrors, can cordially infuse vivacity and vigour into  
20 measures which he knows to be dictated by those who he must be persuaded are in the highest degree ill affected to his person. Will any ministers, who serve such a king (or whatever he may be called) with but a decent appearance of respect, cordially obey the orders of those whom but the other day in his name they had committed to the Bastile ? will they obey the orders of those whom, whilst they were exercising despotic justice upon them, they conceived they were treating with lenity ; and for whom, in a prison, they thought they had provided an asylum ? If you expect such  
30 obedience, amongst your other innovations and regenerations, you ought to make a revolution in nature, and provide a new constitution for the human mind. Otherwise, your supreme government cannot harmonize with its executory system. There are cases in which we cannot take up with names and abstractions. You may call half a dozen leading individuals, whom we have reason to fear and hate, the

nation. It makes no other difference, than to make us fear and hate them the more. If it had been thought justifiable and expedient to make such a revolution by such means, and through such persons, as you have made yours, it would have been more wise to have completed the business of the fifth and sixth of October. The new executive officer would then owe his situation to those who are his creators as well as his masters; and he might be bound in interest, in the society of crime, and (if in crimes there could be virtues) in gratitude, to serve those who had promoted him to a place of 10 great lucre and great sensual indulgence; and of something more: For more he must have received from those who certainly would not have limited an aggrandized creature, as they have done a submitting antagonist.

A king circumstanced as the present, if he is totally stupified by his misfortunes, so as to think it not the necessity, but the premium and privilege of life, to eat and sleep, without any regard to glory, never can be fit for the office. If he feels as men commonly feel, he must be sensible, that an office so circumstanced is one in which he can obtain 20 no fame or reputation. He has no generous interest that can excite him to action. At best, his conduct will be passive and defensive. To inferior people such an office might be matter of honour. But to be raised to it, and to descend to it, are different things, and suggest different sentiments. Does he *really* name the ministers? They will have a sympathy with him. Are they forced upon him? The whole business between them and the nominal king will be mutual counteraction. In all other countries, the office of ministers of state is of the highest dignity. In France it is 30 full of peril and incapable of glory. Rivals however they will have in their nothingness, whilst shallow ambition exists in the world, or the desire of a miserable salary is an incentive to short-sighted avarice. Those competitors of the ministers are enabled by your constitution to attack them in their vital parts, whilst they have not the means of repelling

their charges in any other than the degrading character of culprits. The ministers of state in France are the only persons in that country who are incapable of a share in the national councils. What ministers ! What councils ! What a nation !—But they are responsible. It is a poor service that is to be had from responsibility. The elevation of mind, to be derived from fear, will never make a nation glorious. Responsibility prevents crimes. It makes all attempts against the laws dangerous. But for a principle of  
 10 active and zealous service, none but idiots could think of it. Is the conduct of a war to be trusted to a man who may abhor its principle ; who, in every step he may take to render it successful, confirms the power of those by whom he is oppressed ? Will foreign states seriously treat with him who has no prerogative of peace or war ; no, not so much as in a single vote by himself or his ministers, or by any one whom he can possibly influence ? A state of contempt is not a state for a prince : better get rid of him at once.

I know it will be said, that these humours in the court and  
 20 executive government will continue only through this generation ; and that the king has been brought to declare the dauphin shall be educated in a conformity to his situation. If he is made to conform to his situation, he will have no education at all. His training must be worse even than that of an arbitrary monarch. If he reads,—whether he reads or not, some good or evil genius will tell him his ancestors were kings. Thenceforward his object must be to assert himself, and to avenge his parents. This you will say is not his duty. That may be ; but it is Nature ; and whilst  
 30 you pique Nature against you, you do unwisely to trust to Duty. In this futile scheme of polity, the state nurses in its bosom, for the present, a source of weakness, perplexity, counteraction, inefficiency, and decay ; and it prepares the means of its final ruin. In short, I see nothing in the executive force (I cannot call it authority) that has even an appearance of vigour, or that has the smallest degree of just



correspondence or symmetry, or amicable relation, with the supreme power, either as it now exists, or as it is planned for the future government.

You have settled, by an economy as perverted as the policy, two \* establishments of government ; one real, one fictitious. Both maintained at a vast expense ; but the fictitious at, I think, the greatest. Such a machine as the latter is not worth the grease of its wheels. The expense is exorbitant ; and neither the shew nor the use deserve the tenth part of the charge. Oh ! but I don't do justice to the 10 talents of the legislators. I don't allow, as I ought to do, for necessity. Their scheme of executive force was not their choice. This pageant must be kept. The people would not consent to part with it. Right ; I understand you. You do, in spite of your grand theories, to which you would have heaven and earth to bend, you do know how to conform yourselves to the nature and circumstances of things. But when you were obliged to conform thus far to circumstances, you ought to have carried your submission farther, and to have made what you were obliged to take, a proper instru- 20 ment, and useful to its end. That was in your power. For instance, among many others, it was in your power to leave to your king the right of peace and war. What ! to leave to the executive magistrate the most dangerous of all prerogatives ? I know none more dangerous ; nor any one more necessary to be so trusted. I do not say that this prerogative ought to be trusted to your king, unless he enjoyed other auxiliary trusts along with it, which he does not now hold. But, if he did possess them, hazardous as they are undoubtedly, advantages would arise from such a constitu- 30 tion, more than compensating the risk. There is no other way of keeping the several potentates of Europe from intriguing distinctly and personally with the members of your assembly, from intermeddling in all your concerns, and fomenting, in the heart of your country, the most pernicious

\* In reality three, to reckon the provincial republican establishments.

of all factions ; factions in the interest and under the direction of foreign powers. From that worst of evils, thank God, we are still free. Your skill, if you had any, would be well employed to find out indirect correctives and controls upon this perilous trust. If you did not like those which in England we have chosen, your leaders might have exerted their abilities in contriving better. If it were necessary to exemplify the consequences of such an executive government as yours, in the management of great affairs, I should refer  
10 you to the late reports of M. de Montmorin to the national assembly, and all the other proceedings relative to the differences between Great Britain and Spain. It would be treating your understanding with disrespect to point them out to you.

I hear that the persons who are called ministers have signified an intention of resigning their places. I am rather astonished that they have not resigned long since. For the universe I would not have stood in the situation in which they have been for this last twelvemonth. They wished well,  
20 I take it for granted, to the Revolution. Let this fact be as it may, they could not, placed as they were upon an eminence, though an eminence of humiliation, but be the first to see collectively, and to feel each in his own department, the evils which have been produced by that revolution. In every step which they took, or forbore to take, they must have felt the degraded situation of their country, and their utter incapacity of serving it. They are in a species of subordinate servitude, in which no men before them were ever seen. Without confidence from their sovereign, on whom they  
30 were forced, or from the assembly who forced them upon him, all the noble functions of their office are executed by committees of the assembly, without any regard whatsoever to their personal, or their official authority. They are to execute without power ; they are to be responsible, without discretion ; they are to deliberate, without choice. In their puzzled situation, under two sovereigns, over neither of

whom they have any influence, they must act in such a manner as (in effect, whatever they may intend) sometimes to betray the one, sometimes the other, and always to betray themselves. Such has been their situation; such must be the situation of those who succeed them. I have much respect, and many good wishes, for Mr. Necker. I am obliged to him for attentions. I thought when his enemies had driven him from Versailles, that his exile was a subject of most serious congratulation—*sed multæ urbes et publica vota vicerunt* :

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[ *When lo ! a thousand suppliant altars rise,  
And public vows obtain him from the skies.* ]

He is now sitting on the ruins of the finances, and of the monarchy of France.

A great deal more might be observed on the strange constitution of the executory part of the new government; but fatigue must give bounds to the discussion of subjects, which in themselves have hardly any limits.

As little genius and talent am I able to perceive in the plan of judicature formed by the national assembly. According to their invariable course, the framers of your constitution have begun with the utter abolition of the parliaments. These venerable bodies, like the rest of the old government, stood in need of reform, even though there should be no change made in the monarchy. They required several more alterations to adapt them to the system of a free constitution. But they had particulars in their constitution, and those not a few, which deserved approbation from the wise. They possessed one fundamental excellence; they were independent. The most doubtful circumstance attendant on their office, that of its being vendible, contributed however to this independency of character. They held for life. Indeed they may be said to have held by inheritance. Appointed by the monarch, they were considered as nearly out of his power. The most determined exertions of that authority

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against them only shewed their radical independence. They composed permanent bodies politic, constituted to resist arbitrary innovation ; and from that corporate constitution, and from most of their forms, they were well calculated to afford both certainty and stability to the laws. They had been a safe asylum to secure these laws in all the revolutions of humour and opinion. They had saved that sacred deposit of the country during the reigns of arbitrary princes, and the struggles of arbitrary factions. They kept alive the memory  
10 and record of the constitution. They were the great security to private property ; which might be said (when personal liberty had no existence) to be, in fact, as well guarded in France as in any other country. Whatever is supreme in a state, ought to have, as much as possible, its judicial authority so constituted as not only to depend upon it, but in some sort to balance it. It ought to give a security to its justice against its power. It ought to make its judicature, as it were, something exterior to the state.

These parliaments had furnished, not the best certainly,  
20 but some considerable corrective to the excesses and vices of the monarchy. Such an independent judicature was ten times more necessary when a democracy became the absolute power of the country. In that constitution, elective, temporary, local judges, such as you have contrived, exercising their dependent functions in a narrow society, must be the worst of all tribunals. In them it will be vain to look for any appearance of justice towards strangers, towards the obnoxious rich, towards the minority of routed parties, towards all those who in the election have supported unsuccessful  
30 candidates. It will be impossible to keep the new tribunals clear of the worst spirit of faction. All contrivances by ballot, we know experimentally, to be vain and childish to prevent a discovery of inclinations. Where they may the best answer the purposes of concealment, they answer to produce suspicion, and this is a still more mischievous cause of partiality.

If the parliaments had been preserved, instead of being dissolved at so ruinous a charge to the nation, they might have served in this new commonwealth, perhaps not precisely the same (I do not mean an exact parallel) but near the same purposes as the court and senate of Areopagus did in Athens ; that is, as one of the balances and correctives to the evils of a light and unjust democracy. Every one knows, that this tribunal was the great stay of that state ; every one knows with what care it was upheld, and with what a religious awe it was consecrated. The parliaments were not 10 wholly free from faction, I admit ; but this evil was exterior and accidental, and not so much the vice of their constitution itself, as it must be in your new contrivance of sexennial elective judicatories. Several English commend the abolition of the old tribunals, as supposing that they determined every thing by bribery and corruption. But they have stood the test of monarchic and republican scrutiny. The court was well disposed to prove corruption on those bodies when they were dissolved in 1771. Those who have again dissolved them would have done the same if they could ; but both 20 inquisitions having failed, I conclude, that gross pecuniary corruption must have been rather rare amongst them.

It would have been prudent, along with the parliaments, to preserve their ancient power of registering, and of remonstrating at least, upon all the decrees of the national assembly, as they did upon those which passed in the time of the monarchy. It would be a means of squaring the occasional decrees of a democracy to some principles of general jurisprudence. The vice of the ancient democracies, and one cause of their ruin, was, that they ruled, as you do, by 30 occasional decrees, *psephismata*. This practice soon broke in upon the tenour and consistency of the laws ; it abated the respect of the people towards them ; and totally destroyed them in the end.

Your vesting the power of remonstrance, which, in the time of the monarchy, existed in the parliament of Paris, in

your principal executive officer, whom, in spite of common sense, you persevere in calling king, is the height of absurdity. You ought never to suffer remonstrance from him who is to execute. This is to understand neither council nor execution ; neither authority nor obedience. The person whom you call king, ought not to have this power, or he ought to have more.

Your present arrangement is strictly judicial. Instead of imitating your monarchy, and seating your judges on a  
10 bench of independence, your object is to reduce them to the most blind obedience. As you have changed all things, you have invented new principles of order. You first appoint judges, who, I suppose, are to determine according to law, and then you let them know, that, at some time or other, you intend to give them some law by which they are to determine. Any studies which they have made (if any they have made) are to be useless to them. But to supply these studies, they are to be sworn to obey all the rules, orders, and instructions, which from time to time they are to receive  
20 from the national assembly. These if they submit to, they leave no ground of law to the subject. They become complete, and most dangerous instruments in the hands of the governing power, which, in the midst of a cause, or on the prospect of it, may wholly change the rule of decision. If these orders of the National Assembly come to be contrary to the will of the people who locally choose those judges, such confusion must happen as is terrible to think of. For the judges owe their place to the local authority ; and the commands they are sworn to obey come from those who  
30 have no share in their appointment. In the mean time they have the example of the court of *Chatelet* to encourage and guide them in the exercise of their functions. That court is to try criminals sent to it by the National Assembly, or brought before it by other courses of delation. They sit under a guard, to save their own lives. They know not by what law they judge, nor under what authority they act, nor

by what tenure they hold. It is thought that they are sometimes obliged to condemn at peril of their lives. This is not perhaps certain, nor can it be ascertained ; but when they acquit, we know, they have seen the persons whom they discharge, with perfect impunity to the actors, hanged at the door of their court.

The assembly indeed promises that they will form a body of law, which shall be short, simple, clear, and so forth. That is, by their short laws, they will leave much to the discretion of the judge ; whilst they have exploded the 10 authority of all the learning which could make judicial discretion (a thing perilous at best) deserving the appellation of a *sound* discretion.

It is curious to observe, that the administrative bodies are carefully exempted from the jurisdiction of these new tribunals. That is, those persons are exempted from the power of the laws, who ought to be the most entirely submitted to them. Those who execute public pecuniary trusts, ought of all men to be the most strictly held to their duty. One would have thought, that it must have been among 20 your earliest cares, if you did not mean that those administrative bodies should be real sovereign independent states, to form an awful tribunal, like your late parliaments, or like our king's-bench, where all corporate officers might obtain protection in the legal exercise of their functions, and would find coercion if they trespassed against their legal duty. But the cause of the exemption is plain. These administrative bodies are the great instruments of the present leaders in their progress through democracy to oligarchy. They must therefore be put above the law. It will be said, that 30 the legal tribunals which you have made are unfit to coerce them. They are undoubtedly. They are unfit for any rational purpose. It will be said too, that the administrative bodies will be accountable to the general assembly. This, I fear, is talking without much consideration of the nature of that assembly, or of these corporations. However, to be

subject to the pleasure of that assembly, is not to be subject to law, either for protection or for constraint.

- This establishment of judges as yet wants something to its completion. It is to be crowned by a new tribunal. This is to be a grand state judicature ; and it is to judge of crimes committed against the nation, that is, against the power of the assembly. It seems as if they had something in their view of the nature of the high court of justice erected in England during the time of the great usurpation.
- 10 As they have not yet finished this part of the scheme, it is impossible to form a direct judgment upon it. However, if great care is not taken to form it in a spirit very different from that which has guided them in their proceedings relative to state offences, this tribunal, subservient to their inquisition, *the committee of research*, will extinguish the last sparks of liberty in France, and settle the most dreadful and arbitrary tyranny ever known in any nation. If they wish to give to this tribunal any appearance of liberty and justice, they must not evoke from, or send to it, the causes relative
- 20 to their own members, at their pleasure. They must also remove the seat of that tribunal out of the republic of Paris.\*

HAS more wisdom been displayed in the constitution of your army than what is discoverable in your plan of judicature? The able arrangement of this part is the more difficult, and requires the greater skill and attention, not only as a great concern in itself, but as it is the third cementing principle in the new body of republics, which you call the French nation. Truly it is not easy to divine what that army may become at last. You have voted a very large one,

30 and on good appointments, at least fully equal to your apparent means of payment. But what is the principle of its discipline? or whom is it to obey? You have got the wolf by the ears, and I wish you joy of the happy position

\* For further elucidations upon the subject of all these judicatures, and of the committee of research, see M. de Calonne's work.



in which you have chosen to place yourselves, and in which you are well circumstanced for a free deliberation, relatively to that army, or to any thing else.

The minister and secretary of state for the war department, is M. de la Tour du Pin. This gentleman, like his colleagues in administration, is a most zealous assertor of the revolution, and a sanguine admirer of the new constitution, which originated in that event. His statement of facts, relative to the military of France, is important, not only from his official and personal authority, but because it displays 10 very clearly the actual condition of the army in France, and because it throws light on the principles upon which the assembly proceeds in the administration of this critical object. It may enable us to form some judgment how far it may be expedient in this country to imitate the martial policy of France.

M. de la Tour du Pin, on the 4th of last June, comes to give an account of the state of his department, as it exists under the auspices of the national assembly. No man knows it so well ; no man can express it better. Addressing 20 himself to the National Assembly, he says, 'His Majesty has *this day* sent me to apprise you of the multiplied disorders of which *every day* he receives the most distressing intelligence. The army (le corps militaire) threatens to fall into the most turbulent anarchy. Entire regiments have dared to violate at once the respect due to the laws, to the King, to the order established by your decrees, and to the oaths which they have taken with the most awful solemnity. Compelled by my duty to give you information of these excesses, my heart bleeds when I consider who they are that have 30 committed them. Those, against whom it is not in my power to withhold the most grievous complaints, are a part of that very soldiery which to this day have been so full of honour and loyalty, and with whom, for fifty years, I have lived the comrade and the friend.

'What incomprehensible spirit of delirium and delusion

has all at once led them astray? Whilst you are indefatigable in establishing uniformity in the empire, and moulding the whole into one coherent and consistent body; whilst the French are taught by you, at once the respect which the laws owe to the rights of man, and that which the citizens owe to the laws, the administration of the army presents nothing but disturbance and confusion. I see in more than one corps the bonds of discipline relaxed or broken; the most unheard-of pretensions avowed directly and without  
 10 any disguise; the ordinances without force; the chiefs without authority; the military chest and the colours carried off; the authority of the King himself [*risum teneatis*] [*do not laugh*] proudly defied; the officers despised, degraded, threatened, driven away, and some of them prisoners in the midst of their corps, dragging on a precarious life in the bosom of disgust and humiliation. To fill up the measure of all these horrors, the commandants of places have had their throats cut, under the eyes, and almost in the arms, of their own soldiers.

20 'These evils are great; but they are not the worst consequences which may be produced by such military insurrections. Sooner or later they may menace the nation itself. *The nature of things requires*, that the army should never act but as an instrument. The moment that, erecting itself into a deliberate body, it shall act according to its own resolutions, the government, be it what it may, will immediately degenerate into a military democracy; a species of political monster, which has always ended by devouring those who have produced it.

30 'After all this, who must not be alarmed at the irregular consultations, and turbulent committees, formed in some regiments by the common soldiers and non-commissioned officers, without the knowledge, or even in contempt of the authority of their superiors; although the presence and concurrence of those superiors could give no authority to such monstrous democratic assemblies [*comices*].'

It is not necessary to add much to this finished picture : finished as far as its canvas admits ; but, as I apprehend, not taking in the whole of the nature and complexity of the disorders of this military democracy, which, the minister at war truly and wisely observes, wherever it exists, must be the true constitution of the state, by whatever formal appellation it may pass. For, though he informs the assembly, that the more considerable part of the army have not cast off their obedience, but are still attached to their duty, yet those travellers who have seen the corps whose conduct is 10 the best, rather observe in them the absence of mutiny than the existence of discipline.

I cannot help pausing here for a moment, to reflect upon the expressions of surprise which this Minister has let fall, relative to the excesses he relates. To him the departure of the troops from their ancient principles of loyalty and honour seems quite inconceivable. Surely those to whom he addresses himself know the causes of it but too well. They know the doctrines which they have preached, the decrees which they have passed, the practices which they 20 have countenanced. The soldiers remember the 6th of October. They recollect the French guards. They have not forgot the taking of the King's castles in Paris, and at Marseilles. That the governors in both places were murdered with impunity is a fact that has not passed out of their minds. They do not abandon the principles, laid down so ostentatiously and laboriously, of the equality of men. They cannot shut their eyes to the degradation of the whole noblesse of France ; and the suppression of the very idea of a gentleman. The total abolition of titles and distinctions is 30 not lost upon them. But Mr. du Pin is astonished at their disloyalty, when the doctors of the assembly have taught them at the same time the respect due to laws. It is easy to judge which of the two sorts of lessons men with arms in their hands are likely to learn. As to the authority of the King, we may collect from the minister himself (if any

argument on that head were not quite superfluous) that it is not of more consideration with these troops, than it is with every body else. 'The King,' says he, 'has over and over again repeated his orders to put a stop to these excesses : but, in so terrible a crisis, *your* [the assembly's] concurrence is become indispensably necessary to prevent the evils which menace the state. *You* unite to the force of the legislative power, *that of opinion* still more important.' To be sure the army can have no opinion of the power or authority of the  
 10 king. Perhaps the soldier has by this time learned, that the assembly itself does not enjoy a much greater degree of liberty than that royal figure.

It is now to be seen what has been proposed in this exigency, one of the greatest that can happen in a state. The Minister requests the assembly to array itself in all its terrors, and to call forth all its majesty. He desires that the grave and severe principles announced by them may give vigour to the King's proclamation. After this we should have looked for courts civil and martial ; breaking of some  
 20 corps, decimating others, and all the terrible means which necessity has employed in such cases to arrest the progress of the most terrible of all evils : particularly, one might expect, that a serious inquiry would be made into the murder of commandants in the view of their soldiers. Not one word of all this, or of any thing like it. After they had been told that the soldiery trampled upon the decrees of the assembly promulgated by the King, the assembly pass new decrees ; and they authorise the King to make new proclamations. After the Secretary at War had stated that the  
 30 regiments had paid no regard to oaths *prêtés avec la plus imposante solennité*—[administered with the most imposing solemnity]—they propose—what ? More oaths. They renew decrees and proclamations as they experience their insufficiency, and they multiply oaths in proportion as they weaken, in the minds of men, the sanctions of religion. I hope that handy abridgments of the excellent sermons of

Voltaire, d'Alembert, Diderot, and Helvetius, on the Immortality of the Soul, on a particular superintending Providence, and on a Future State of Rewards and Punishments, are sent down to the soldiers along with their civic oaths. Of this I have no doubt ; as I understand, that a certain description of reading makes no inconsiderable part of their military exercises, and that they are full as well supplied with the ammunition of pamphlets as of cartridges.

To prevent the mischiefs arising from conspiracies, irregular consultations, seditious committees, and monstrous 10 democratic assemblies [‘comitia,’ ‘comices’] of the soldiers, and all the disorders arising from idleness, luxury, dissipation, and insubordination, I believe the most astonishing means have been used, that ever occurred to men, even in all the inventions of this prolific age. It is no less than this :—The King has promulgated in circular letters to all the regiments his direct authority and encouragement, that the several corps should join themselves with the clubs and confederations in the several municipalities, and mix with them in their feasts and civic entertainments ! This jolly 20 discipline, it seems, is to soften the ferocity of their minds ; to reconcile them to their bottle companions of other descriptions ; and to merge particular conspiracies in more general associations \*. That this remedy would be pleasing to the soldiers, as they are described by Mr. de la Tour du Pin, I can readily believe : and that, however mutinous otherwise,

\* Comme sa Majesté y a reconnu, non une système d'associations particulières, mais une réunion de volontés de tous les François pour la liberté et la prospérité communes, ainsi pour le maintien de l'ordre public ; il a pensé qu'il convenoit que chaque régiment prit part a ces fêtes civiques pour multiplier les rapports, et reserrer les liens d'union entre les citoyens et les troupes. [As his majesty has recognized in them not a system of particular associations, but a union of the wills of all Frenchmen in favour of general liberty and prosperity, as well as for the maintenance of public order, he has thought it fitting that every regiment should take part in these civic festivals, so as to multiply the connexions and tighten the bonds of union between the citizens and the troops.] Lest I should not be credited, I insert the words, authorising the troops to feast with the popular confederacies.

they will dutifully submit themselves to *these* royal proclamations. But I should question whether all this civic swearing, clubbing, and feasting, would dispose them more than at present they are disposed, to an obedience to their officers ; or teach them better to submit to the austere rules of military discipline. It will make them admirable citizens after the French mode, but not quite so good soldiers after any mode. A doubt might well arise, whether the conversations at these good tables, would fit them a great deal the better for the  
10 character of *mere instruments*, which this veteran officer and statesman justly observes, the nature of things always requires an army to be.

Concerning the likelihood of this improvement in discipline, by the free conversation of the soldiers with the municipal festive societies, which is thus officially encouraged by royal authority and sanction, we may judge by the state of the municipalities themselves, furnished to us by the war minister in this very speech. He conceives good hopes of the success of his endeavours towards restoring order *for the*  
20 *present* from the good disposition of certain regiments ; but he finds something cloudy with regard to the future. As to preventing the return of confusion 'for this, the administration (says he) cannot be answerable to you, as long as they see the municipalities arrogate to themselves an authority over the troops, which your institutions have reserved wholly to the monarch. You have fixed the limits of the military authority and the municipal authority. You have bounded the action, which you have permitted to the latter over the former, to the right of requisition ; but never did the letter or  
30 the spirit of your decrees authorise the commons in these municipalities to break the officers, to try them, to give orders to the soldiers, to drive them from the posts committed to their guard, to stop them in their marches ordered by the king, or, in a word, to enslave the troops to the caprice of each of the cities or even market towns through which they are to pass.'

Such is the character and disposition of the municipal society which is to reclaim the soldiery, to bring them back to the true principles of military subordination, and to render them machines in the hands of the supreme power of the country ! Such are the distempers of the French troops ! Such is their cure ! As the army is, so is the navy. The municipalities supersede the orders of the assembly, and the seamen in their turn supersede the orders of the municipalities. From my heart I pity the condition of a respectable servant of the public, like this war minister, obliged in his 10 old age to pledge the assembly in their civic cups, and to enter with a hoary head into all the fantastic vagaries of these juvenile politicians. Such schemes are not like propositions coming from a man of fifty years wear and tear amongst mankind. They seem rather such as ought to be expected from those grand compounders in politics, who shorten the road to their degrees in the state ; and have a certain inward fanatical assurance and illumination upon all subjects ; upon the credit of which one of their doctors has thought fit, with great applause, and greater success, to 20 caution the assembly not to attend to old men, or to any persons who valued themselves upon their experience. I suppose all the ministers of state must qualify, and take this test ; wholly abjuring the errors and heresies of experience and observation. Every man has his own relish. But I think, if I could not attain to the wisdom, I would at least preserve something of the stiff and peremptory dignity of age. These gentlemen deal in regeneration ; but at any price I should hardly yield my rigid fibres to be regenerated by them ; nor begin, in my grand climacteric, to squall in 30 their new accents, or to stammer, in my second cradle, the elemental sounds of their barbarous metaphysics.\* *Si isti mihi largiantur ut repuerascam, et in eorum cunis vagiam, valde recusem !* [*If I might become a child again, and cry in their cradles, I should certainly refuse !*]

\* This war minister has since quitted the school and resigned his office.

The imbecility of any part of the puerile and pedantic system, which they call a constitution, cannot be laid open without discovering the utter insufficiency and mischief of every other part with which it comes in contact, or that bears any the remotest relation to it. You cannot propose a remedy for the incompetence of the crown, without displaying the debility of the assembly. You cannot deliberate on the confusion of the army of the state, without disclosing the worse disorders of the armed municipalities. The military lays open the civil, and the civil betrays the military anarchy. I wish every body carefully to peruse the eloquent speech (such it is) of Mons. de la Tour du Pin. He attributes the salvation of the municipalities to the good behaviour of some of the troops. These troops are to preserve the well-disposed part of those municipalities, which is confessed to be the weakest, from the pillage of the worst disposed, which is the strongest. But the municipalities affect a sovereignty, and will command those troops which are necessary for their protection. Indeed, they must com-  
mand them, or court them. The municipalities, by the necessity of their situation, and by the republican powers they have obtained, must, with relation to the military, be the masters, or the servants, or the confederates, or each successively; or they must make a jumble of all together, according to circumstances. What government is there to coerce the army but the municipality, or the municipality but the army? To preserve concord where authority is extinguished, at the hazard of all consequences, the assembly attempts to cure the distempers by the distempers themselves; and they hope to preserve themselves from a purely military democracy, by giving it a debauched interest in the municipal.

If the soldiers once come to mix for any time in the municipal clubs, cabals, and confederacies, an elective attraction will draw them to the lowest and most desperate part. With them will be their habits, affections, and sympathies. The



military conspiracies, which are to be remedied by civic confederacies ; the rebellious municipalities, which are to be rendered obedient, by furnishing them with the means of seducing the very armies of the state that are to keep them in order ; all these chimeras of a monstrous and portentous policy, must aggravate the confusions from which they have arisen. There must be blood. The want of common judgment manifested in the construction of all their descriptions of forces, and in all their kinds of civil and judicial authorities, will make it flow. Disorders may be quieted in 10 one time and in one part. They will break out in others ; because the evil is radical and intrinsic. All these schemes of mixing mutinous soldiers with seditious citizens, must weaken still more and more the military connection of soldiers with their officers, as well as add military and mutinous audacity to turbulent artificers and peasants. To secure a real army, the officer should be first and last in the eye of the soldier ; first and last in his attention, observance, and esteem. Officers it seems there are to be, whose chief qualification must be temper and patience. They are to 20 manage their troops by electioneering arts. They must bear themselves as candidates not as commanders. But as by such means power may be occasionally in their hands, the authority by which they are to be nominated becomes of high importance.

What you may do finally does not appear ; nor is it of much moment, whilst the strange and contradictory relation between your army and all the parts of your republic, as well as the puzzled relation of those parts to each other and to the whole, remain as they are. You seem to have given the 30 provisional nomination of the officers, in the first instance, to the king, with a reserve of approbation by the National Assembly. Men who have an interest to pursue are extremely sagacious in discovering the true seat of power. They must soon perceive that those who can negative indefinitely in reality appoint. The officers must therefore

look to their intrigues in that assembly, as the sole certain road to promotion. Still, however, by your new constitution they must begin their solicitation at court. This double negotiation for military rank seems to me a contrivance as well adapted, as if it were studied for no other end, to promote faction in the assembly itself, relative to this vast military patronage; and then to poison the corps of officers with factions of a nature still more dangerous to the safety of government upon any bottom on which it can be placed, 10 and destructive in the end to the efficiency of the army itself. Those officers, who lose the promotions intended for them by the crown, must become of a faction opposite to that of the assembly which has rejected their claims, and must nourish discontents in the heart of the army against the ruling powers. Those officers, on the other hand, who, by carrying their point through an interest in the assembly, feel themselves to be at best only second in the good-will of the crown, though first in that of the assembly, must slight an authority which would not advance, and could not retard 20 their promotion. If to avoid these evils you will have no other rule for command or promotion than seniority, you will have an army of formality; at the same time it will become more independent, and more of a military republic. Not they but the king is the machine. A king is not to be deposed by halves. If he is not every thing in the command of an army, he is nothing. What is the effect of a power placed nominally at the head of the army, who to that army is no object of gratitude, or of fear? Such a cipher is not fit for the administration of an object of all things the 30 most delicate, the supreme command of military men. They must be constrained (and their inclinations lead them to what their necessities require) by a real vigorous, effective, decided personal authority. The authority of the assembly itself suffers by passing through such a debilitating channel as they have chosen. The army will not long look to an assembly acting through the organ of false shew, and palp-

able imposition. They will not seriously yield obedience to a prisoner. They will either despise a pageant, or they will pity a captive king. This relation of your army to the crown will, if I am not greatly mistaken, become a serious dilemma in your politics.

It is besides to be considered, whether an assembly like yours, even supposing that it was in possession of another sort of organ through which its orders were to pass, is fit for promoting the obedience and discipline of an army. It is known, that armies have hitherto yielded a very precarious 10 and uncertain obedience to any senate, or popular authority ; and they will least of all yield it to an assembly which is to have only a continuance of two years. The officers must totally lose the characteristic disposition of military men, if they see with perfect submission and due admiration, the dominion of pleaders ; especially when they find, that they have a new court to pay to an endless succession of those pleaders, whose military policy, and the genius of whose command (if they should have any) must be as uncertain as their duration is transient. In the weakness of one kind of author- 20 ity, and in the fluctuation of all, the officers of an army will remain for some time mutinous and full of faction, until some popular general, who understands the art of conciliating the soldiery, and who possesses the true spirit of command shall draw the eyes of all men upon himself. Armies will obey him on his personal account. There is no other way of securing military obedience in this state of things. But the moment in which that event shall happen, the person who really commands the army is your master ; the master (that is little) of your king, the master of your assembly, the master of your 30 whole republic.

How came the assembly by their present power over the army ? Chiefly, to be sure, by debauching the soldiers from their officers. They have begun by a most terrible operation. They have touched the central point, about which the particles that compose armies are at repose. They have destroyed the

principle of obedience in the great essential critical link between the officer and the soldier, just where the chain of military subordination commences, and on which the whole of that system depends. The soldier is told he is a citizen, and has the rights of man and citizen. The right of a man, he is told, is to be his own governor, and to be ruled only by those to whom he delegates that self-government. It is very natural he should think, that he ought most of all to have his choice where he is to yield the greatest degree of obedience. He

10 will therefore, in all probability, systematically do, what he does at present occasionally ; that is, he will exercise at least a negative in the choice of his officers. At present the officers are known at best to be only permissive, and on their good behaviour. In fact, there have been many instances in which they have been cashiered by their corps. Here is a second negative on the choice of the king ; a negative as effectual at least as the other of the assembly. The soldiers know already that it has been a question, not ill received in the national assembly, whether they ought not to have the direct choice

20 of their officers, or some proportion of them ? When such matters are in deliberation. it is no extravagant supposition that they will incline to the opinion most favourable to their pretensions. They will not bear to be deemed the army of an imprisoned king, whilst another army in the same country, with whom too they are to feast and confederate, is to be considered as the free army of a free constitution. They will cast their eyes on the other and more permanent army ; I mean the municipal. That corps, they well know, does actually elect its own officers. They may not be able to discern

30 the grounds of distinction on which they are not to elect a Marquis de la Fayette (or what is his new name) of their own ? If this election of a commander in chief be a part of the rights of men, why not of theirs ? They see elective justices of peace, elective judges, elective curates, elective bishops, elective municipalities, and elective commanders of the Parisian army. —Why should they alone be excluded ? Are the brave troops

of France the only men in that nation who are not the fit judges of military merit, and of the qualifications necessary for a commander in chief? Are they paid by the state, and do they therefore lose the rights of men? They are a part of that nation themselves, and contribute to that pay. And is not the king, is not the national assembly, and are not all who elect the national assembly, likewise paid? Instead of seeing all these forfeit their rights by their receiving a salary, they perceive that in all these cases a salary is given for the exercise of those rights. All your resolutions, all your proceedings, all your debates, all the works of your doctors in religion and politics, have industriously been put into their hands; and you expect that they will apply to their own case just as much of your doctrines and examples as suits your pleasure!

Every thing depends upon the army in such a government as yours; for you have industriously destroyed all the opinions, and prejudices, and, as far as in you lay, all the instincts which support government. Therefore the moment any difference arises between your national assembly and any part of the nation, you must have recourse to force. Nothing else is left to you; or rather you have left nothing else to yourselves. You see by the report of your war minister, that the distribution of the army is in a great measure made with a view of internal coercion.\* You must rule by an army; and you have infused into that army by which you rule, as well as into the whole body of the nation, principles which after a time must disable you in the use you resolve to make of it. The king is to call out troops to act against his people, when the world has been told, and the assertion is still ringing in our ears, that troops ought not to fire on citizens. The colonies assert to themselves an independent constitution and a free trade. They must be constrained by troops. In what chapter of your code of the rights of men are they able to

\* *Courier François*, 30 July, 1790. *Assemblée Nationale*, Numéro 210.

read, that it is a part of the rights of men to have their commerce monopolized and restrained for the benefit of others? ~~As~~ the colonists rise on you, the negroes rise on them. Troops again—Massacre, torture, hanging! These are your rights of men! These are the fruits of metaphysic declarations wantonly made, and shamefully retracted! It was but the other day that the farmers of land in one of your provinces refused to pay some sorts of rents to the lord of the soil. In consequence of this, you decree that the country people shall  
 10 pay all rents and dues, except those which as grievances you have abolished; and if they refuse, then you order the king to march troops against them. You lay down metaphysic propositions which infer universal consequences, and then you attempt to limit logic by despotism. The leaders of the present system tell them of their rights, as men, to take fortresses, to murder guards, to seize on kings without the least appearance of authority even from the assembly, whilst, as the sovereign legislative body, that assembly was sitting in the name of the nation; and yet these leaders presume to  
 20 order out the troops, which have acted in these very disorders, to coerce those who shall judge on the principles, and follow the examples, which have been guarantied by their own approbation!

The leaders teach the people to abhor and reject all feodality as the barbarism of tyranny, and they tell them afterwards how much of that barbarous tyranny they are to bear with patience. As they are prodigal of light with regard to grievances, so the people find them sparing in the extreme with regard to redress. They know that not only  
 30 certain quit-rents and personal duties, which you have permitted them to redeem (but have furnished no money for the redemption) are as nothing to those burthens for which you have made no provision at all. They know, that almost the whole system of landed property in its origin is feudal; that it is the distribution of the possessions of the original proprietors, made by a barbarous conqueror to his

barbarous instruments ; and that the most grievous effects of conquest are the land rents of every kind, as without question they are. •

The peasants, in all probability, are the descendants of these ancient proprietors, Romans or Gauls. But if they fail, in any degree, in the titles which they make on the principles of antiquaries and lawyers, they retreat into the citadel of the rights of men. There they find that men are equal ; and the earth, the kind and equal mother of all, ought not to be monopolized to foster the pride and luxury 10 of any men, who by nature are no better than themselves, and who, if they do not labour for their bread, are worse. They find, that by the laws of nature the occupant and subduer of the soil is the true proprietor ; that there is no prescription against nature ; and that the agreements (where any there are) which have been made with their landlords, during the time of slavery, are only the effect of duress and force ; and that when the people re-entered into the rights of men, those agreements were made as void as every thing else which had been settled under the prevalence of the old 20 feudal and aristocratic tyranny. They will tell you that they see no difference between an idler with a hat and a national cockade, and an idler in a cowl or in a rochet. If you ground the title to rents on succession and prescription, they tell you, from the speech of Mr. Camus, published by the national assembly for their information, that things ill begun cannot avail themselves of prescription ; that the title of these lords was vicious in its origin ; and that force is at least as bad as fraud. As to the title by succession, they will tell you, that the succession of those who have cultivated 30 the soil is the true pedigree of property, and not rotten parchments and silly substitutions ; that the lords have enjoyed the usurpation too long ; and that if they allow to these lay monks any charitable pension, they ought to be thankful to the bounty of the true proprietor, who is so generous towards a false claimant to his goods.

When the peasants give you back that coin of sophistic reason, on which you have set your image and superscription, you cry it down as base money, and tell them you will pay for the future with French guards, and dragoons, and hussars. You hold up, to chastise them, the second-hand authority of a king, who is only the instrument of destroying, without any power of protecting either the people or his own person. Through him, it seems, you will make yourselves obeyed. They answer, You have taught us that there are  
10 no gentlemen ; and which of your principles teach us to bow to kings whom we have not elected ? We know, without your teaching, that lands were given for the support of feudal dignities, feudal titles, and feudal offices. When you took down the cause as a grievance, why should the more grievous effect remain ? As there are now no hereditary honours, and no distinguished families, why are we taxed to maintain what *you* tell us ought to exist ? You have sent down our old aristocratic landlords in no other character, and with no other title, but that of exactors under your  
20 authority. Have you endeavoured to make these your rent-gatherers respectable to us ? No. You have sent them to us with their arms reversed, their shields broken, their impresses defaced ; and so displumed, degraded, and metamorphosed, such unfeathered, two-legged things, that we no longer know them. They are strangers to us. They do not even go by the names of our ancient lords. Physically they may be the same men, though we are not quite sure of that, on your new philosophic doctrines of personal identity. In all other respects they are totally changed. We do not see  
30 why we have not as good a right to refuse them their rents, as you have to abrogate all their honours, titles, and distinctions. This we have never commissioned you to do ; and it is one instance, among many indeed, of your assumption of undelegated power. We see the burghers of Paris, through their clubs, their mobs, and their national guards, directing you at their pleasure, and giving that as law to you, which,



under your authority, is transmitted as law to us. Through you, these burghers dispose of the lives and fortunes of us all. Why should not you attend as much to the desires of the laborious husbandman with regard to our rent, by which we are affected in the most serious manner, as you do to the demands of these insolent burghers, relative to distinctions and titles of honour; by which neither they nor we are affected at all? But we find you pay more regard to their fancies than to our necessities. Is it among the rights of man to pay tribute to his equals? Before this measure of 10 yours, we might have thought we were not perfectly equal. We might have entertained some old, habitual, unmeaning prepossession in favour of those landlords; but we cannot conceive with what other view than that of destroying all respect to them, you could have made the law that degrades them. You have forbidden us to treat them with any of the old formalities of respect, and now you send troops to sabre and to bayonet us into a submission to fear and force, which you did not suffer us to yield to the mild authority of opinion.

20

The ground of some of these arguments is horrid and ridiculous to all rational ears; but to the politicians of metaphysics who have opened schools for sophistry, and made establishments for anarchy, it is solid and conclusive. It is obvious, that on a mere consideration of the right, the leaders in the assembly would not in the least have scrupled to abrogate the rents along with the titles and family ensigns. It would be only to follow up the principle of their reasonings, and to complete the analogy of their conduct. But they had newly possessed themselves of a great body of 30 landed property by confiscation. They had this commodity at market; and the market would have been wholly destroyed, if they were to permit the husbandmen to riot in the speculations with which they so freely intoxicated themselves. The only security which property enjoys in any one of its descriptions, is from the interests of their rapacity with

regard to some other. They have left nothing but their own arbitrary pleasure to determine what property is to be protected and what subverted.

Neither have they left any principle by which any of their municipalities can be bound to obedience ; or even conscientiously obliged not to separate from the whole, to become independent, or to connect itself with some other state. The people of Lyons, it seems, have refused lately to pay taxes. Why should they not ? What lawful authority  
10 is there left to exact them. The king imposed some of them. The old states, methodised by orders, settled the more ancient. They may say to the assembly, Who are you, that are not our kings, nor the states we have elected, nor sit on the principles on which we have elected you ? And who are we, that when we see the gabelles, which you have ordered to be paid, wholly shaken off, when we see the act of disobedience afterwards ratified by yourselves—who are we, that we are not to judge what taxes we ought or ought not to pay, and who are not to avail ourselves of the  
20 same powers, the validity of which you have approved in others ? To this the answer is, We will send trôops. The last reason of kings is always the first with your assembly. This military aid may serve for a time, whilst the impression of the increase of pay remains, and the vanity of being umpires in all disputes is flattered. But this weapon will snap short, unfaithful to the hand that employs it. The assembly keep a school where, systematically, and with unremitting perseverance, they teach principles, and form regulations, destructive to all spirit of subordination, civil and  
30 military—and then they expect that they shall hold in obedience an anarchic people by an anarchic army !

The municipal army, which, according to their new policy, is to balance this national army, if considered in itself only, is of a constitution much more simple, and in every respect less exceptionable. It is a mere democratic body, unconnected with the crown or the kingdom ; armed,

and trained, and officered at the pleasure of the districts to which the corps severally belong; and the personal service of the individuals who compose it, or the fine in lieu of personal service, are directed by the same authority.\* Nothing is more uniform. If, however, considered in any relation to the crown, to the national assembly, to the public tribunals, or to the other army, or considered in a view to any coherence or connection between its parts, it seems a monster, and can hardly fail to terminate its perplexed movements in some great national calamity. It is a worse 10 preservative of a general constitution, than the systasis of Crete, or the confederation of Poland, or any other ill-devised corrective which has yet been imagined, in the necessities produced by an ill-constructed system of government.

HAVING concluded my few remarks on the constitution of the supreme power, the executive, the judicature, the military, and on the reciprocal relation of all these establishments, I shall say something of the ability shewed by your legislators with regard to the revenue. 20

In their proceedings relative to this object, if possible, still fewer traces appear of political judgment or financial resource. When the states met, it seemed to be the great object to improve the system of revenue, to enlarge its connection, to cleanse it of oppression and vexation, and to establish it on the most solid footing. Great were the expectations entertained on that head throughout Europe. It was by this grand arrangement that France was to stand or fall; and this became, (in my opinion, very properly,) the test by which the skill and patriotism of those who ruled in that 30

\* I see by M. Necker's account, that the national guards of Paris have received, over and above the money levied within their own city, about £145,000 sterling out of the public treasure. Whether this be an actual payment for the nine months of their existence, or an estimate of their yearly charge, I do not clearly perceive. It is of no great importance, as certainly they may take whatever they please.

assembly would be tried. The revenue of the state is the state. In effect all depends upon it, whether for support or for reformation. The dignity of every occupation wholly depends upon the quantity and the kind of virtue that may be exerted in it. As all great qualities of the mind which operate in public, and are not merely suffering and passive, require force for their display, I had almost said for their unequivocal existence, the revenue, which is the spring of all power, becomes in its administration the sphere of every active

10 virtue. Public virtue, being of a nature magnificent and splendid, instituted for great things, and conversant about great concerns, requires abundant scope and room, and cannot spread and grow under confinement, and in circumstances straitened, narrow, and sordid. Through the revenue alone the body politic can act in its true genius and character, and therefore it will display just as much of its collective virtue, and as much of that virtue which may characterise those who move it, and are, as it were, its life and guiding principle, as it is possessed of a just revenue.

20 For from hence, not only magnanimity, and liberality, and beneficence, and fortitude, and providence, and the tutelary protection of all good arts, derive their food, and the growth of their organs, but continence, and self-denial, and labour, and vigilance, and frugality, and whatever else there is in which the mind shews itself above the appetite, are no where more in their proper element than in the provision and distribution of the public wealth. It is therefore not without reason that the science of speculative and practical finance, which must take to its aid so many auxiliary branches of

30 knowledge, stands high in the estimation not only of the ordinary sort, but of the wisest and best men; and as this science has grown with the progress of its object, the prosperity and improvement of nations has generally increased with the increase of their revenues; and they will both continue to grow and flourish, as long as the balance between what is left to strengthen the efforts of individuals,

and what is collected for the common efforts of the state, bear to each other a due reciprocal proportion, and are kept in a close correspondence and communication. And perhaps it may be owing to the greatness of revenues, and to the urgency of state necessities, that old abuses in the constitution of finances are discovered, and their true nature and rational theory comes to be more perfectly understood; in-somuch that a smaller revenue might have been more distressing in one period than a far greater is found to be in another; the proportionate wealth even remaining the same. 10 In this state of things, the French assembly found something in their revenues to preserve, to secure, and wisely to administer, as well as to abrogate and alter. Though their proud assumption might justify the severest tests, yet in trying their abilities on their financial proceedings, I would only consider what is the plain obvious duty of a common finance minister, and try them upon that, and not upon models of ideal perfection.

The objects of a financier are, then, to secure an ample revenue; to impose it with judgment and equality; to 20 employ it economically; and when necessity obliges him to make use of credit, to secure its foundations in that instance, and for ever, by the clearness and candour of his proceedings, the exactness of his calculations, and the solidity of his funds. On these heads we may take a short and distinct view of the merits and abilities of those in the national assembly, who have taken to themselves the management of this arduous concern. Far from any increase of revenue in their hands, I find, by a report of M. Vernier, from the committee of finances, of the second of August last, that the 30 amount of the national revenue, as compared with its produce before the revolution, was diminished by the sum of two hundred millions, or *eight millions sterling* of the annual income—considerably more than one third of the whole!

If this be the result of great ability, never surely was ability displayed in a more distinguished manner, or with so

powerful an effect. No common folly, no vulgar incapacity, no ordinary official negligence, even no official crime, no corruption, no speculation, hardly any direct hostility which we have seen in the modern world, could in so short a time have made so complete an overthrow of the finances, and with them, of the strength, of a great kingdom.—*Cedo qui vestram rempublicam tantam amisistis tam cito?* [*Tell me how it is that you have so quickly brought that great state of yours to nothing?*]

- 10 The sophisters and declaimers, as soon as the assembly met, began with decrying the ancient constitution of the revenue in many of its most essential branches, such as the public monopoly of salt. They charged it, as truly as unwisely, with being ill-contrived, oppressive, and partial. This representation they were not satisfied to make use of in speeches preliminary to some plan of reform; they declared it in a solemn resolution or public sentence, as it were judicially, passed upon it; and this they dispersed throughout the nation. At the time they passed the decree,
- 20 with the same gravity they ordered this same absurd, oppressive, and partial tax to be paid, until they could find a revenue to replace it. The consequence was inevitable. The provinces which had been always exempted from this salt monopoly, some of whom were charged with other contributions, perhaps equivalent, were totally disinclined to bear any part of the burthen, which by an equal distribution was to redeem the others. As to the assembly, occupied as it was with the declaration and violation of the rights of men, and with their arrangements for general confusion, it
- 30 had neither leisure nor capacity to contrive, nor authority to enforce any plan of any kind relative to the replacing the tax or equalizing it, or compensating the provinces, or for conducting their minds to any scheme of accommodation with the other districts which were to be relieved.

The people of the salt provinces, impatient under taxes damned by the authority which had directed their payment,

very soon found their patience exhausted. They thought themselves as skilful in demolishing as the assembly could be. They relieved themselves by throwing off the whole burthen. Animated by this example, each district, or part of a district, judging of its own grievance by its own feeling, and of its remedy by its own opinion, did as it pleased with other taxes.

We are next to see how they have conducted themselves in contriving equal impositions, proportioned to the means of the citizens, and the least likely to lean heavy on the 10 active capital employed in the generation of that private wealth, from whence the public fortune must be derived. By suffering the several districts, and several of the individuals in each district, to judge of what part of the old revenue they might withhold, instead of better principles of equality, a new inequality was introduced of the most oppressive kind. Payments were regulated by dispositions. The parts of the kingdom which were the most submissive, the most orderly, or the most affectionate to the commonwealth, bore the whole burthen of the state. Nothing turns 20 out to be so oppressive and unjust as a feeble government. To fill up all the deficiencies in the old impositions, and the new deficiencies of every kind which were to be expected, what remained to a state without authority? The national assembly called for a voluntary benevolence; for a fourth part of the income of all the citizens, to be estimated on the honour of those who were to pay. They obtained something more than could be rationally calculated, but what was far indeed from answerable to their real necessities, and much less to their fond expectations. Rational people could 30 have hoped for little from this their tax in the disguise of a benevolence; a tax, weak, ineffective, and unequal; a tax by which luxury, avarice, and selfishness were screened, and the load thrown upon productive capital, upon integrity, generosity, and public spirit—a tax of regulation upon virtue. At length the mask is thrown off, and they are now

trying means (with little success) of exacting their benevolence by force.

This benevolence, the ricketty offspring of weakness, was to be supported by another resource, the twin brother of the same prolific imbecility. The patriotic donations were to make good the failure of the patriotic contribution. John Doe was to become security for Richard Roe. By this scheme they took things of much price from the giver, comparatively of small value to the receiver; they ruined several  
10 trades; they pillaged the crown of its ornaments, the churches of their plate, and the people of their personal decorations. The invention of these juvenile pretenders to liberty, was in reality nothing more than a servile imitation of one of the poorest resources of doting despotism. They took an old huge full-bottomed periwig out of the wardrobe of the antiquated frippery of Louis XIV., to cover the premature baldness of the national assembly. They produced this old-fashioned formal folly, though it had been so abundantly exposed in the Memoirs of the Duke de St. Simon, if  
20 to reasonable men it had wanted any arguments to display its mischief and insufficiency. A device of the same kind was tried in my memory by Louis XV., but it answered at no time. However, the necessities of ruinous wars were some excuse for desperate projects. The deliberations of calamity are rarely wise. But here was a season for disposition and providence. It was in a time of profound peace, then enjoyed for five years, and promising a much longer continuance, that they had recourse to this desperate trifling. They were sure to lose more reputation by sporting, in their  
30 serious situation, with these toys and playthings of finance, which have filled half their journals, than could possibly be compensated by the poor temporary supply which they afforded. It seemed as if those who adopted such projects were wholly ignorant of their circumstances, or wholly unequal to their necessities. Whatever virtue may be in these devices, it is obvious that neither the patriotic gifts, nor the



patriotic contribution, can ever be resorted to again. The resources of public folly are soon exhausted. The whole indeed of their scheme of revenue is to make, by any artifice, an appearance of a full reservoir for the hour, whilst at the same time they cut off the springs and living fountains of perennial supply. The account not long since furnished by Mr. Necker was meant, without question, to be favourable. He gives a flattering view of the means of getting through the year ; but he expresses, as it is natural he should, some apprehension for that which was to succeed. On this last 10 prognostic, instead of entering into the grounds of this apprehension, in order, by a proper foresight, to prevent the prognosticated evil, Mr. Necker receives a sort of friendly reprimand from the president of the assembly.

As to their other schemes of taxation, it is impossible to say any thing of them with certainty ; because they have not yet had their operation ; but nobody is so sanguine as to imagine they will fill up any perceptible part of the wide gaping breach which their incapacity has made in their revenues. At present the state of their treasury sinks every 20 day more and more in cash, and swells more and more in fictitious representation. When so little within or without is now found but paper, the representative not of opulence but of want, the creature not of credit but of power, they imagine that our flourishing state in England is owing to that bank-paper, and not the bank-paper to the flourishing condition of our commerce, to the solidity of our credit, and to the total exclusion of all idea of power from any part of the transaction. They forget that, in England, not one shilling of paper-money of any description is received but of choice ; 30 that the whole has had its origin in cash actually deposited ; and that it is convertible, at pleasure, in an instant, and without the smallest loss, into cash again. Our paper is of value in commerce, because in law it is of none. It is powerful on Change, because in Westminster-hall it is impotent. In payment of a debt of twenty shillings, a creditor

may refuse all the paper of the bank of England. Nor is there amongst us a single public security, of any quality or nature whatsoever, that is enforced by authority. In fact it might be easily shewn, that our paper wealth, instead of lessening the real coin, has a tendency to increase it; instead of being a substitute for money, it only facilitates its entry, its exit, and its circulation; that it is the symbol of prosperity, and not the badge of distress. Never was a scarcity of cash, and an exuberance of paper, a subject of complaint in 10 this nation.

Well! But a lessening of prodigal expenses, and the economy which has been introduced by the virtuous and sapient assembly, makes amends for the losses sustained in the receipt of revenue. In this at least they have fulfilled the duty of a financier.—Have those, who say so, looked at the expenses of the national assembly itself? of the municipalities? of the city of Paris? of the increased pay of the two armies? of the new police? of the new judicatures? Have they even carefully compared the present 20 pension-list with the former? These politicians have been cruel, not economical. Comparing the expenses of the former prodigal government, and its relation to the then revenues, with the expenses of this new system as opposed to the state of its new treasury, I believe the present will be found beyond all comparison more chargeable.\*

\* The reader will observe, that I have but lightly touched (my plan demanded nothing more) on the condition of the French finances, as connected with the demands upon them. If I had intended to do otherwise, the materials in my hands for such a task are not altogether perfect. On this subject I refer the reader to M. de Calonne's work; and the tremendous display that he has made of the havock, and devastation in the public estate, and in all the affairs of France, caused by the presumptuous good intentions of ignorance and incapacity. Such effects those causes will always produce. Looking over that account with a pretty strict eye, and, with perhaps too much rigour, deducting every thing which may be placed to the account of a financier out of place, who might be supposed by his enemies desirous of making the most of his cause, I believe it will be found, that a more salutary lesson of caution against the daring spirit of innovators than what has been supplied at the expense of France, never was at any time furnished to mankind.

It remains only to consider the proofs of financial ability furnished by the present French managers when they are to raise supplies on credit. Here I am a little at a stand; for credit, properly speaking, they have none. The credit of the ancient government was not indeed the best: but they could always, on some terms, command money, not only at home, but from most of the countries of Europe where a surplus capital was accumulated; and the credit of that government was improving daily. The establishment of a system of liberty would of course be supposed to give it 10 new strength; and so it would actually have done, if a system of liberty had been established. What offers has their government of pretended liberty had from Holland, from Hamburgh, from Switzerland, from Genoa, from England, for a dealing in their paper? Why should these nations of commerce and economy enter into any pecuniary dealings with a people who attempt to reverse the very nature of things; amongst whom they see the debtor prescribing, at the point of the bayonet, the medium of his solvency to the creditor; discharging one of his engage- 20 ments with another; turning his very penury into his resource; and paying his interest with his rags?

Their fanatical confidence in the omnipotence of church plunder, has induced these philosophers to overlook all care of the public estate, just as the dream of the philosopher's stone induces dupes, under the more plausible delusion of the hermetic art, to neglect all rational means of improving their fortunes. With these philosophic financiers, this universal medicine made of church mummy is to cure all the evils of the state. These gentlemen perhaps do 30 not believe a great deal in the miracles of piety; but it cannot be questioned that they have an undoubting faith in the prodigies of sacrilege. Is there a debt which presses them?—Issue *assignats*. Are compensations to be made, or a maintenance decreed to those whom they have robbed of their freehold in their office, or expelled from their

profession?—*Assignats*. Is a fleet to be fitted out?—*Assignats*. If sixteen millions sterling of these *assignats*, forced on the people, leave the wants of the state as urgent as ever—issue, says one, thirty millions sterling of *assignats*—says another, issue fourscore millions more of *assignats*. The only difference among their financial factions is on the greater or the lesser quantity of *assignats* to be imposed on the public sufferance. They are all professors of *assignats*. Even those, whose natural good sense and know-  
 10 ledge of commerce, not obliterated by philosophy, furnish decisive arguments against this delusion, conclude their arguments, by proposing the emission of *assignats*. I suppose they must talk of *assignats*, as no other language would be understood. All experience of their inefficacy does not in the least discourage them. Are the old *assignats* depreciated at market? What is the remedy?—Issue new *assignats*.—*Mais si maladie, opiniâtreté, non vult se garire, quid illi facere?*—*Assignare; postea assignare; ensuite assignare*. [But if the disease obstinately refuses to be cured, what  
 20 is to be done? Issue *assignats*: again issue *assignats*: yet again issue *assignats*.] The word is a trifle altered. The Latin of your present doctors may be better than that of your old comedy; their wisdom, and the variety of their resources, are the same. They have not more notes in their song than the cuckoo; though, far from the softness of that harbinger of summer and plenty, their voice is as harsh and as ominous as that of the raven.

Who but the most desperate adventurers in philosophy and finance could at all have thought of destroying the  
 30 settled revenue of the state, the sole security for the public credit, in the hope of rebuilding it with the materials of confiscated property? If, however, an excessive zeal for the state should have led a pious and venerable prelate, by anticipation a father of the church,\* to pillage his own order, and, for the good of the church and people, to

\* La Bruyère of Bossuet.

take upon himself the place of grand financier of confiscation, and comptroller-general of sacrilege, he and his coadjutors were, in my opinion, bound to shew, by their subsequent conduct, that they knew something of the office they assumed. When they had resolved to appropriate to the *Fisc* a certain portion of the landed property of their conquered country, it was their business to render their bank a real fund of credit, as far as such a bank was capable of becoming so.

To establish a current circulating credit upon any Land-bank, 10 under any circumstances whatsoever, has hitherto proved difficult at the very least. The attempt has commonly ended in bankruptcy. But when the assembly were led, through a contempt of moral, to a defiance of economical principles, it might at least have been expected that nothing would be omitted on their part to lessen this difficulty, to prevent any aggravation of this bankruptcy. It might be expected that to render your Land-bank tolerable, every means would be adopted that could display openness and candour in the statement of the security; every thing which could aid the re- 20 covery of the demand. To take things in their most favourable point of view, your condition was that of a man of a large landed estate, which he wished to dispose of for the discharge of a debt, and the supply of certain services. Not being able instantly to sell, you wished to mortgage. What would a man of fair intentions, and a commonly clear understanding, do in such circumstances? Ought he not first to ascertain the gross value of the estate; the charges of its management and disposition; the encumbrances, perpetual and temporary, of all kinds, that affect it; then, striking a net surplus, to 30 calculate the just value of the security? When that surplus, the only security to the creditor, had been clearly ascertained, and properly vested in the hands of trustees; then he would indicate the parcels to be sold, and the time, and conditions of sale; after this, he would admit the public creditor, if he chose it, to subscribe his stock into this new fund; or he

might receive proposals for an *assignat* from those who would advance money to purchase this species of security.

This would be to proceed like men of business, methodically and rationally ; and on the only principles of public and private credit that have an existence. The dealer would then know exactly what he purchased ; and the only doubt which could hang upon his mind would be, the dread of the resumption of the spoil, which one day might be made (perhaps with an addition of punishment) from the sacrilegious gripe of  
10 those execrable wretches who could become purchasers at the auction of their innocent fellow-citizens.

An open and exact statement of the clear value of the property, and of the time, the circumstances, and the place of sale, were all necessary, to efface as much as possible the stigma that has hitherto been branded on every kind of Land-bank. It became necessary on another principle, that is, on account of a pledge of faith previously given on that subject, that their future fidelity in a slippery concern might be established by their adherence to their first engagement. When  
20 they had finally determined on a state resource from church booty, they came, on the 14th of April 1790, to a solemn resolution on the subject ; and pledged themselves to their country, 'that in the statement of the public charges for each year there should be brought to account a sum sufficient for defraying the expenses of the R.C.A. religion, the support of the ministers at the altars, the relief of the poor, the pensions to the ecclesiastics, secular as well as regular, of the one and of the other sex, *in order that the estates and goods which are at the disposal of the nation may be disengaged of all charges,*  
30 *and employed by the representatives, or the legislative body, to the great and most pressing exigencies of the state.'* They further engaged, on the same day, that the sum necessary for the year 1791 should be forthwith determined.

In this resolution they admit it their duty to show distinctly the expense of the above objects, which, by other resolutions, they had before engaged should be first in the order of pro-

vision. They admit that they ought to shew the estate clear and disengaged of all charges, and that they should shew it immediately. Have they done this immediately, or at any time? Have they ever furnished a rent-roll of the immoveable estates, or given in an inventory of the moveable effects which they confiscate to their *assignats*? In what manner they can fulfil their engagements of holding out to public service 'an estate disengaged of all charges,' without authenticating the value of the estate, or the *quantum* [amount] of the charges, I leave it to their English admirers to explain. 10 Instantly upon this assurance, and previously to any one step towards making it good, they issue, on the credit of so handsome a declaration, sixteen millions sterling of their paper. This was manly. Who, after this masterly stroke, can doubt of their abilities in finance?—But then, before any other emission of these financial *indulgences*, they took care at least to make good their original promise!—If such estimate, either of the value of the estate or the amount of the incumbrances, has been made, it has escaped me. I never heard of it. 20

At length they have spoken out, and they have made a full discovery of their abominable fraud, in holding out the church lands as a security for any debts or any service whatsoever. They rob only to enable them to cheat; but in a very short time they defeat the ends both of the robbery and the fraud, by making out accounts for other purposes, which blow up their whole apparatus of force and of deception. I am obliged to M. de Calonne for his reference to the document which proves this extraordinary fact: it had, by some means, escaped me. Indeed it was not necessary to make out my 30 assertion as to the breach of faith on the declaration of the 14th of April 1790. By a report of their Committee it now appears, that the charge of keeping up the reduced ecclesiastical establishments, and other expenses attendant on religion, and maintaining the religious of both sexes, retained or pensioned, and the other concomitant expenses of the same nature,

which they have brought upon themselves by this convulsion in property, exceeds the income of the estates acquired by it in the enormous sum of two millions sterling annually; besides a debt of seven millions and upwards. These are the calculating powers of imposture! This is the finance of philosophy! This is the result of all the delusions held out to engage a miserable people in rebellion, murder, and sacrilege, and to make them prompt and zealous instruments in the ruin of their country! Never did a state, in any case, 10 enrich itself by the confiscations of the citizens. This new experiment has succeeded like all the rest. Every honest mind, every true lover of liberty and humanity must rejoice to find that injustice is not always good policy, nor rapine the high road to riches. I subjoin with pleasure, in a note, the able and spirited observations of M. de Calonne on this subject.\*

\* 'Ce n'est point à l'assemblée entière que je m'adresse ici; je ne parle qu'à ceux qui l'égarent, en lui cachant sous des gazes séduisantes le but où ils l'entraînent. C'est à eux que je dis: Votre objet, vous n'en disconviendrez pas, c'est d'ôter tout espoir au clergé, & de consommer sa ruine; c'est-là, en ne vous soupçonnant d'aucune combinaison de cupidité, d'aucun regard sur le jeu des effets publics, c'est-là ce qu'on doit croire que vous avez en vue dans la terrible opération que vous proposez; c'est ce qui doit en être le fruit. Mais le peuple que vous y intéressez, quel avantage peut-il y trouver? En vous servant sans cesse de lui, que faites vous pour lui? Rien, absolument rien; &, au contraire, vous faites ce qui ne conduit qu'à l'accabler de nouvelles charges. Vous avez rejeté, à son préjudice, une offre de 400 millions, dont l'acceptation pouvoit devenir un moyen de soulagement en sa faveur; & à cette ressource, aussi profitable que légitime, vous avez substitué une injustice ruineuse, qui, de votre propre aveu, charge le trésor public, & par conséquent le peuple, d'un surcroît de dépense annuelle de 50 millions au moins, & d'un remboursement de 150 millions.

'Malheureux peuple! voilà ce que vous vaut en dernier résultat l'expropriation de l'Eglise, & la dureté des décrets taxateurs du traitement des ministres d'une religion bienfaisante; & désormais ils seront à votre charge: leurs charités soulageoient les pauvres; & vous allez être imposés pour subvenir à leur entretien!'—*De l'Etat de la France*, p. 81. See also p. 92, and the following pages. [I am not here addressing myself to the whole assembly: I am speaking only to those who mislead it by concealing from it, by specious glosses, the goal to which they are dragging it. To these men I say—Your object, you will not deny it, is to deprive the clergy of all hope and to complete their ruin. Without suspecting you of being influenced by cupidity, or of having the gam-



In order to persuade the world of the bottomless resource of ecclesiastical confiscation, the assembly have proceeded to other confiscations of estates in offices, which could not be done with any common colour without being compensated out of this grand confiscation of landed property. They have thrown upon this fund, which was to shew a surplus, disengaged of all charges, a new charge; namely, the compensation to the whole body of the disbanded judicature; and of all suppressed offices and estates; a charge which I cannot ascertain, but which unquestionably amounts to many 10 French millions. Another of the new charges, is an annuity of four hundred and eighty thousand pounds sterling, to be paid (if they choose to keep faith) by daily payments, for the interest of the first assignats. Have they ever given themselves the trouble to state fairly the expense of the management of the church lands in the hands of the municipalities, to whose care, skill, and diligence, and that of their legion of unknown under-agents, they have chosen to commit the charge of the forfeited estates, and the consequence of which had been so ably pointed out by the bishop of 20 Nancy?

But it is unnecessary to dwell on these obvious heads of incumbrance. Have they made out any clear state of the

bling in public property in view, one must believe that that is what you contemplate in the terrible operation which you propose, and that that is to be the fruit of it. But what advantage can the people, whom you are interesting in it, derive from it? What are you doing for the people of whom you are constantly making use? Nothing: absolutely nothing. On the contrary, everything that you do tends to burden them with new charges. You have injured them by refusing an offer of 4,000,000, the acceptance of which might have been a means of relieving them: and in place of this resource, which was as profitable as it was legitimate, you have substituted a ruinous injustice, which, by your own confession, burdens the public treasury, and consequently the people, with an increased expenditure of 50,000,000 at least, and with a repayment of 150,000,000.

Unhappy people! See what you gain after all by depriving the church of its property, and by the harshness of the taxes levied for the payment of the priests of a beneficent religion. Henceforth you will have to support them. Their charities used to relieve the poor: and you are to be taxed to provide for their maintenance.]

grand incumbrance of all, I mean the whole of the general and municipal establishments of all sorts, and compared it with the regular income by revenue? Every deficiency in these becomes a charge on the confiscated estate, before the creditor can plant his cabbages on an acre of church property. There is no other prop than this confiscation to keep the whole state from tumbling to the ground. In this situation they have purposely covered all that they ought industriously to have cleared, with a thick fog; and then, 10 blindfold themselves, like bulls that shut their eyes when they push, they drive, by the point of the bayonets, their slaves, blindfolded indeed no worse than their lords, to take their fictions for currencies, and to swallow down paper pills by thirty-four millions sterling at a dose. Then they proudly lay in their claim to a future credit, on failure of all their past engagements, and at a time when (if in such a matter any thing can be clear) it is clear that the surplus estates will never answer even the first of their mortgages, I mean that of the four hundred million (or sixteen millions sterling) 20 of *assignats*. In all this procedure I can discern neither the solid sense of plain dealing, nor the subtle dexterity of ingenious fraud. The objections within the assembly to pulling up the flood-gates for this inundation of fraud, are unanswered; but they are thoroughly refuted by an hundred thousand financiers in the street. These are the numbers by which the metaphysic arithmeticians compute. These are the grand calculations on which a philosophical public credit is founded in France. They cannot raise supplies; but they can raise mobs. Let them rejoice in the applauses 30 of the club at Dundee, for their wisdom and patriotism in having thus applied the plunder of the citizens to the service of the state. I hear of no address upon this subject from the directors of the Bank of England; though their approbation would be of a little more weight in the scale of credit than that of the club at Dundee. But, to do justice to the club, I believe the gentlemen who compose it to be wiser

than they appear ; that they will be less liberal of their money than of their addresses ; and that they would not give a dog's-ear of their most rumpled and ragged Scotch paper for twenty of your fairest *assignats*.

Early in this year the assembly issued paper to the amount of sixteen millions sterling. What must have been the state into which the assembly has brought your affairs, that the relief afforded by so vast a supply has been hardly perceptible ? This paper also felt an almost immediate depreciation of five per cent., which in little time came to about seven. The effect of these *assignats* on the receipt of the revenue is remarkable. Mr. Necker found that the collectors of the revenue, who received in coin, paid the treasury in *assignats*. The collectors made seven per cent. by thus receiving in money, and accounting in depreciated paper. It was not very difficult to foresee that this must be inevitable. It was, however, not the less embarrassing. Mr. Necker was obliged (I believe, for a considerable part, in the market of London) to buy gold and silver for the mint, which amounted to about twelve thousand pounds above the value of the commodity gained. The minister was of opinion, that whatever their secret nutritive virtue might be, the state could not live upon *assignats* alone ; that some real silver was necessary, particularly for the satisfaction of those, who having iron in their hands, were not likely to distinguish themselves for patience, when they should perceive that whilst an increase of pay was held out to them in real money, it was again to be fraudently drawn back by depreciated paper. The minister, in this very natural distress, applied to the assembly, that they should order the collectors to pay in specie what in specie they had received. It could not escape him, that if the treasury paid three per cent. for the use of a currency, which should be returned seven per cent. worse than the minister issued it, such a dealing could not very greatly tend to enrich the public. The assembly took no notice of his recommendation. They were in this

dilemma ; if they continued to receive the assignats, each must become an alien to their treasury : if the treasury should refuse those paper *amulets*, or should discountenance them in any degree, they must destroy the credit of their sole resource. They seem then to have made their option ; and to have given some sort of credit to their paper by taking it themselves ; at the same time in their speeches they made a sort of swaggering declaration, something, I rather think, above legislative competence ; that is, that  
 10 there is no difference in value between metallic money and their assignats. This was a good stout proof article of faith, pronounced under an anathema, by the venerable fathers of this philosophic synod. *Credat* [*let him believe*] who will—certainly not *Judeus Apella*.

A noble indignation rises in the minds of your popular leaders, on hearing the magic lanthorn in their shew of finance compared to the fraudulent exhibitions of Mr. Law. They cannot bear to hear the sands of his Mississippi compared with the rock of the church, on which they build their  
 20 system. Pray let them suppress this glorious spirit, until they shew to the world what piece of solid ground there is for their *assignats*, which they have not pre-occupied by other charges. They do injustice to that great, mother fraud, to compare it with their degenerate imitation. It is not true, that Law built solely on a speculation concerning the Mississippi. He added the East India trade ; he added the African trade ; he added the farms of all the farmed revenue of France. All these together unquestionably could not support the structure which the public enthusiasm, not  
 30 he, chose to build upon these bases. But these were, however, in comparison, generous delusions. They supposed, and they aimed at, an increase of the commerce of France. They opened to it the whole range of the two hemispheres. They did not think of feeding France from its own substance. A grand imagination found in this flight of commerce something to captivate. It was wherewithal to dazzle

the eye of an eagle. It was not made to entice the smell of a mole, nuzzling and burying himself in his mother earth, as yours is. Men were not then quite shrunk from their natural dimensions by a degrading and sordid philosophy, and fitted for low and vulgar deceptions. Above all remember, that in imposing on the imagination, the then managers of the system made a compliment to the freedom of men. In their fraud there was no mixture of force. This was reserved to our time, to quench the little glimmerings of reason which might break in upon the solid darkness of this 10 enlightened age.

On recollection, I have said nothing of a scheme of finance which may be urged in favour of the abilities of these gentlemen, and which has been introduced with great pomp, though not yet finally adopted in the national assembly. It comes with something solid in aid of the credit of the paper circulation; and much has been said of its utility and its elegance. I mean the project for coining into money the bells of the suppressed churches. This is their alchymy. There are some follies which baffle argument; which go beyond ridicule; and 20 which excite no feeling in us but disgust; and therefore I say no more upon it.

It is as little worth remarking any farther upon all their drawing and re-drawing, on their circulation for putting off the evil day, on the play between the treasury and the *Caisse d'Escompte*, and on all these old exploded contrivances of mercantile fraud, now exalted into policy of state. The revenue will not be trifled with. The prattling about the rights of men will not be accepted in payment for a biscuit or a pound of gunpowder. Here then the metaphysicians descend from 30 their airy speculations, and faithfully follow examples. What examples? the examples of bankrupts. But, defeated, baffled, disgraced, when their breath, their strength, their inventions, their fancies desert them, their confidence still maintains its ground. In the manifest failure of their abilities they take credit for their benevolence. When the revenue disappears

in their hands, they have the presumption, in some of their late proceedings, to value *themselves* on the relief given to the people. They did not relieve the people. If they entertained such intentions, why did they order the obnoxious taxes to be paid? The people relieved themselves in spite of the assembly.

But waiving all discussion on the parties who may claim the merit of this fallacious relief, has there been, in effect, any relief to the people, in any form? Mr. Bailly, one of the  
10 grand agents of paper circulation, lets you into the nature of this relief. His speech to the National Assembly contained an high and laboured panegyric on the inhabitants of Paris for the constancy and unbroken resolution with which they have borne their distress and misery. A fine picture of public felicity! What! great courage and unconquerable firmness of mind to endure benefits, and sustain redress? One would think from the speech of this learned Lord Mayor, that the Parisians, for this twelvemonth past, had been suffering the straits of some dreadful blockade; that Henry the Fourth  
20 had been stopping up the avenues to their supply, and Sully thundering with his ordnance at the gates of Paris; when in reality they are besieged by no other enemies than their own madness and folly, their own credulity and perverseness. But Mr. Bailly will sooner thaw the eternal ice of his atlantic regions, than restore the central heat to Paris, whilst it remains 'smitten with the cold, dry, petrifick mace' of a false and unfeeling philosophy. Some time after this speech, that is, on the thirteenth of last August, the same magistrate, giving an account of his government at the bar of the same  
30 assembly, expresses himself as follows: 'In the month of July 1789,' (the period of everlasting commemoration) 'the finances of the city of Paris were *yet* in good order; the expenditure was counterbalanced by the receipt, and she had at that time a million (forty thousand pounds sterling) in bank. The expenses which she has been constrained to incur *subsequent to the revolution*, amount to 2,500,000 livres. From

these expenses, and the great falling off in the product of the *free gifts*, not only a momentary, but a *total* want of money has taken place.' 'This is the Paris upon whose nourishment, in the course of the last year, such immense sums, drawn from the vitals of all France, have been expended! As long as Paris stands in the place of ancient Rome, so long she will be maintained by the subject provinces. It is an evil inevitably attendant on the dominion of sovereign democratic republics. As it happened in Rome, it may survive that republican domination which gave rise to it. In that case 10 despotism itself must submit to the vices of popularity. Rome, under her emperors, united the evils of both systems; and this unnatural combination was one great cause of her ruin.

To tell the people that they are relieved by the dilapidation of their public estate, is a cruel and insolent imposition. Statesmen, before they valued themselves on the relief given to the people by the destruction of their revenue, ought first to have carefully attended to the solution of this problem:—Whether it be more advantageous to the people to pay 20 considerably, and to gain in proportion; or to gain little or nothing, and to be disburthened of all contribution? My mind is made up to decide in favour of the first proposition. Experience is with me, and, I believe, the best opinions also. To keep a balance between the power of acquisition on the part of the subject, and the demands he is to answer on the part of the state, is a fundamental part of the skill of a true politician. The means of acquisition are prior in time and in arrangement. Good order is the foundation of all good things. To be enabled to acquire, the people, 30 without being servile must be tractable and obedient. The magistrate must have his reverence, the laws their authority. The body of the people must not find the principles of natural subordination, by art rooted out of their minds. They must respect that property of which they cannot partake. They must labour to obtain what

by labour can be obtained ; and when they find, as they commonly do, the success disproportioned to the endeavour, they must be taught their consolation in the final proportions of eternal justice. Of this consolation, whoever deprives them, deadens their industry, and strikes at the root of all acquisition as of all conservation. He that does this is the cruel oppressor, the merciless enemy of the poor and wretched ; at the same time that by his wicked speculations he exposes the fruits of successful industry, 10 and the accumulations of fortune, to the plunder of the negligent, the disappointed, and the unprosperous.

Too many of the financiers by profession are apt to see nothing in revenue, but banks, and circulations, and annuities on lives, on tontines, and perpetual rents, and all the small wares of the shop. In a settled order of the state, these things are not to be slighted, nor is the skill in them to be held of trivial estimation. They are good, but then only good, when they assume the effects of that settled order, and are built upon it. But when men 20 think that these beggarly contrivances may supply a resource for the evils which result from breaking up the foundations of public order, and from causing or suffering the principles of property to be subverted, they will, in the ruin of their country, leave a melancholy and lasting monument of the effect of preposterous politics, and presumptuous, short-sighted, narrow-minded wisdom.

THE effects of the incapacity shewn by the popular leaders in all the great members of the commonwealth are to be covered with the 'all-atoning name' of liberty. 30 In some people I see great liberty indeed ; in many, if not in the most, an oppressive, degrading servitude. But what is liberty without wisdom, and without virtue ? It is the greatest of all possible evils ; for it is folly, vice, and madness, without tuition or restraint. Those who know what virtuous liberty is, cannot bear to see it disgraced by



incapable heads, on account of their having high-sounding words in their mouths. Grand, swelling sentiments of liberty, I am sure I do not despise. They warm the heart ; they enlarge and liberalise our minds ; they animate our courage in a time of conflict. Old as I am, I read the fine raptures of Lucan and Corneille with pleasure. Neither do I wholly condemn the little arts and devices of popularity. They facilitate the carrying of many points of moment ; they keep the people together ; they refresh the mind in its exertions ; and they diffuse occasional gaiety over the severe 10 brow of moral freedom. Every politician ought to sacrifice to the graces ; and to join compliance with reason. But in such an undertaking as that in France, all these subsidiary sentiments and artifices are of little avail. To make a government requires no great prudence. Settle the seat of power ; teach obedience ; and the work is done. To give freedom is still more easy. It is not necessary to guide ; it only requires to let go the rein. But to form a *free government* ; that is, to temper together these opposite elements of liberty and restraint in one consistent work, requires much thought ; 20 deep reflection ; a sagacious, powerful, and combining mind. This I do not find in those who take the lead in the national assembly. Perhaps they are not so miserably deficient as they appear. I rather believe it. It would put them below the common level of human understanding. But when the leaders choose to make themselves bidders at an auction of popularity, their talents, in the construction of the state, will be of no service. They will become flatterers instead of legislators ; the instruments, not the guides of the people. If any of them should happen to propose a scheme of 30 liberty, soberly limited, and defined with proper qualifications, he will be immediately outbid by his competitors, who will produce something more splendidly popular. Suspicions will be raised of his fidelity to his cause. Moderation will be stigmatized as the virtue of cowards, and compromise as the prudence of traitors ; until, in hopes of preserving the

credit which may enable him to temper and moderate on some occasions, the popular leader is obliged to become active in propagating doctrines, and establishing powers, ~~the~~ which afterwards defeat any sober purpose at which he ultimately might have aimed.

But am I so unreasonable as to see nothing at all that deserves commendation in the indefatigable labours of this assembly? I do not deny that among an infinite number of acts of violence and folly, some good may have been done.

10 They who destroy every thing certainly will remove some grievance. They who make every thing new, have a chance that they may establish something beneficial. To give them credit for what they have done in virtue of the authority they have usurped, or which can excuse them in the crimes by which that authority has been acquired, it must appear, that the same things could not have been accomplished without producing such a revolution. Most assuredly they might ; because almost every one of the regulations made by them, which is not very equivocal, was either in the cession of the

20 king, voluntarily made at the meeting of the states, or in the concurrent instructions to the orders. Some usages have been abolished on just grounds ; but they were such that if they had stood as they were to all eternity, they would little detract from the happiness and prosperity of any state. The improvements of the national assembly are superficial ; their errors, fundamental.

Whatever they are, I wish my countrymen rather to commend to our neighbours the example of the British constitution, than to take models from them for the improve-

30 ment of our own. In the former they have got an invaluable treasure. They are not, I think, without some causes of apprehension and complaint ; but these they do not owe to their constitution, but to their own conduct. I think our happy situation owing to our constitution ; but owing to the whole of it, and not to any part singly ; owing in a great measure to what we have left standing in our several reviews

and reformatations, as well as to what we have altered or superadded. Our people will find employment enough for a truly patriotic, free, and independent spirit, in guarding what they possess, from violation. I would not exclude alteration neither ; but even when I changed, it should be to preserve. I should be led to my remedy by a great grievance. In what I did, I should follow the example of our ancestors. I would make the reparation as nearly as possible in the style of the building. A politic caution, a guarded circumspection, a moral rather than a complexional timidity, were 10 among the ruling principles of our forefathers in their most decided conduct. Not being illuminated with the light of which the gentlemen of France tell us they have got so abundant a share, they acted under a strong impression of the ignorance and fallibility of mankind. He that had made them thus fallible, rewarded them for having in their conduct attended to their nature. Let us imitate their caution, if we wish to deserve their fortune, or to retain their bequests. Let us add, if we please ; but let us preserve what they have left ; and, standing on the firm ground of the British constitution, let us be satisfied to admire rather than attempt to follow in their desperate flights the aeronauts of France. 20

I have told you candidly my sentiments. I think they are not likely to alter yours. I do not know that they ought. You are young ; you cannot guide, but must follow the fortune of your country. But hereafter they may be of some use to you, in some future form which your commonwealth may take. In the present it can hardly remain ; but before its final settlement it may be obliged to pass, as one of our poets says, ' through great varieties of untried being,' 30 and in all its transmigrations to be purified by fire and blood.

I have little to recommend my opinions, but long observation and much impartiality. They come from one who has been no tool of power, no flatterer of greatness ; and who in his last acts does not wish to belie the tenour of his life.

They come from one, almost the whole of whose public exertion has been a struggle for the liberty of others ; from one in whose breast no anger durable or vehement has ever been kindled, but by what he considered as tyranny ; and who snatches from his share in the endeavours which are used by good men to discredit opulent oppression, the hours he has employed on your affairs ; and who in so doing persuades himself he has not departed from his usual office. They come from one who desires honours, distinctions, and  
 10 emoluments, but little, and who expects them not at all ; who has no contempt for fame, and no fear of obloquy ; who shuns contention, though he will hazard an opinion : from one who wishes to preserve consistency ; but who would preserve consistency by varying his means to secure the unity of his end ; and, when the equipoise of the vessel in which he sails may be endangered by overloading it upon one side, is desirous of carrying the small weight of his reasons to that which may preserve its equipoise.

## NOTES.

Pp. 3-14. *An insignificant little English club, which was in the habit of meeting to celebrate the Anniversary of the Revolution of 1688, had forwarded a note of approval and sympathy to the French Assembly, which the Assembly had acknowledged. It was a disingenuous attempt to represent the opinion of a few obscure individuals in England as that of an important and well-known society. A man may value freedom and yet be unwilling to congratulate the French on having again become free. Freedom may be used for evil as well as for good, especially by a body like the French Assembly, which is really a tool in the hands of interested agitators. Freedom is not a good thing, unless it is compatible with social order. Lovers of reasonable liberty should make it their business to disclaim sympathy with the revolutionary propaganda of France. The address presented to the Assembly embodied the principles of a sermon preached by Dr. Price. Religion ought not to be made an instrument for stimulating political passion. Religion should be free from the animosity of politics; and political causes should not be made to suffer from the political ignorance of the clergy. Dr. Price seems principally interested in preaching the gospel of intellectual anarchy. But the privilege of religious toleration must not be used to foment social disorder.*

P. 3, l. 2. *you are pleased, etc., you pay me the compliment of asking.*

l. 3. *I will not, etc.* They are not so valuable that I should wish to keep them, or hesitate to part with them.

l. 7. *from attention to you,* Burke thought that, if the letter had been opened, it would have compromised the person to whom it was addressed.

l. 11. *neither for nor from, etc.* I did not claim to represent any class (description) of men, nor had any class of men asked me to be their spokesman.

1. 16. **rational liberty**, Notice how careful Burke is to qualify the word *liberty*. It is his practice to take up the common watchwords of French politics, and to define their real import. He deals with the words *equality*, *nature*, *rights*, and *contract*, in the same way. Cf. p. 7, l. 27. **that**, used to connect the clause with *though*, on which it depends. The meaning is—though I wish and though I think.

1. 17. **in all honest policy**, it is both right and expedient.

P. 4, l. 3. **Revolution Society**, Mr. Payne points out that, owing to its application to the assertion of the principles of English Constitutional Liberty in 1688, the word Revolution was used in a favourable sense. 'Revolution Society,' therefore, meant 'Constitutional Society.' The word has acquired an exclusively unfavourable sense since the events of the French Revolution.

1. 6. **the glorious Revolution**, viz.: of 1688. Cf. "our revolution," below, and "the Revolution," l. 14.

1. 16. **cautious and deliberate**, qualities which Burke always insists on as characterizing sound statesmanship.

1. 21. **as bodies**, this is the ground of Burke's objection. Letters from the individual members of the club would have commanded no attention.

1. 25. **or by some such title**, Burke insinuates that, if the club had been of any importance, he would have had no difficulty in recalling the name of it. "Several societies, which had been formed for other objects, now avowed their sympathy and fellowship with the Revolutionary party in France—addressed the National Convention—corresponded with political clubs and public men in Paris, and imitated the sentiments, the language, and the cant then in vogue across the channel. Of these the most conspicuous were the 'Revolution Society,' the 'Society for Constitutional Information,' and the 'London Corresponding Society.' The Revolution Society had been formed long since, to commemorate the English Revolution of 1688, and not that of France, a century later. It met annually on the 4th of November, when its principal toasts were the memory of King William, trial by jury, and the liberty of the press. On the 4th of November, 1788, the centenary of the Revolution had been commemorated throughout the country by men of all parties; and the Revolution Society had been attended by a Secretary of State, and other distinguished persons. But the excitement of the time quickened it with a new life; and historical sentiment was lost in political agitation. The example of France almost effaced the memory of William. The Society for Constitutional Information had been formed in 1780, to instruct the people in their political rights, and to forward the cause of Parliamentary reform. Among its

early members were the Duke of Richmond, Mr. Fox, Mr. Pitt himself, and Mr. Sheridan. These soon left the society: but Mr. Wyvill, Major Cartwright, Mr. Horne Tooke, and a few more zealous politicians continued to support it, advocating universal suffrage, and distributing obscure tracts. It was scarcely known to the public: its funds were low: and it was only saved from a natural death by the French Revolution." May, *Constitutional History of England*, vol. ii. p. 132.

l. 27. so far, Burke wishes to distinguish between their charities and their political action.

l. 29. few others, etc., notice the irony of the expression. The books circulated were not such as individuals could not afford to buy for themselves, but such as were not worth buying. They were principally the writings of contemporary pamphleteers.

l. 31. booksellers, publishers. Cf. I once said to him, "I am sorry, Sir, you did not get more for your dictionary." His answer was, "I am sorry too. But it was very well. The *booksellers* are generous liberal-minded men." He, upon all occasions, did ample justice to their character in this respect. He considered them as the patrons of literature.—Boswell, *Life of Johnson*. an useful body, viz. the publishers.

l. 33. charitably read, here again the expression is ironical. It was a kindness to read the books: that is, they were not worth reading.

l. 36. I have heard, etc. People are fond of talking of the lessons that are to be learnt (lights to be drawn) from the institutions and political treatises of Englishmen. If the writings circulated by this Society have conveyed any information to the French, they must have improved by the sea voyage, as wine is said to do; for there was certainly no good in them when they were despatched from England.

P. 5, l. 2. meliorated, ameliorated: improved.

l. 10. poor, a contemptuous epithet, naturally applied to a club whose chief business it was to distribute worthless commodities. As a nation, because the acknowledgment of the vote came not from individual Frenchmen, but from the Assembly, or representatives of the French nation. Cf. p. 5, l. 14; and p. 7, l. 2.

l. 12. their fellows, literally, their companions: i.e., those who acted in the same way with them. Both societies sent expressions of approval, and both ought, in fairness, to have been thanked.

l. 18. adopting, recognizing them. The vote of the Assembly has given to the club a position which it would not otherwise have had.

l. 21. **privileged persons**, viz. : as the accredited agents of the French Assembly. A member of the diplomatic body is a person deputed by a government to represent it at a foreign conference.

l. 23. **This is one**, etc. But for their recognition by the French Assembly, we should never have heard of these insignificant nobodies.

l. 28. **set**, a party, or clique.

l. 29. **dissenters**, members of any but the Established Church. **denomination**, sect : literally, the title by which the particular Church is known.

l. 32. **as other clubs do**, In Burke's days clubs did not own or rent houses. The members met at a tavern, and the name of the club was generally taken from that of the tavern at which the meetings were held. Aubrey, writing in the seventeenth century says, "We now use the word clubbe for a sodality in a tavern." Johnson describes a club as "an assembly of good fellows meeting under certain conditions." Perhaps the earliest club of which mention is made in literature is the Mermaid Club. It was founded by Raleigh, and Shakespeare is said to have been a member of it. Political clubs came into existence in the seventeenth century. Dryden says, "What right has any man to meet in factious clubs to vilify the government?" The literature of the eighteenth century teems with allusions to clubs, political, literary, and social. When a young man, Burke was a frequent speaker at a debating club called the Robin Hood. He was a member of *The Club*, founded in 1764, of which frequent mention is made in Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. He used occasionally to dine with a party of friends at the St. James' Coffee House, which was the great Whig Coffee House from the time of Queen Anne until late in the reign of George III. He was also a member of a Whig club called Brookes's.

l. 34. **much less**, Burke implies that it is a piece of impertinence in any individuals to address a foreign government. Communications to a foreign power should be forwarded through the government of the country from which they are sent, and the government, as the representative of the nation, is to judge what communications it is desirable for the nation to send abroad. Cf. p. 6, ll. 20-26.

P. 6, l. 10. **pious**, ironical. Christ says that we should do good in secret, so as to avoid any suspicion of ostentation and vanity. The persons to whom Burke alludes had been doing mischief in secret. Wishing to commit the English to an approval of revolutionary principles, but afraid or unwilling to appear in the matter themselves, they had used this club as an instrument for effecting their purpose. Mr. Payne quotes from



Stanhope's *Life of Pitt* to the effect that the Society had then been lately "new-modelled," with a view to co-operating with the French Revolutionists.

l. 14. For one, speaking for myself.

l. 18. is doing, 'ing' represents the old gerund. So Johnson writes, "I hope your new book is printing." The preposition in, in its old forms 'on' or 'a' was frequently prefixed, e.g. he is a-writing.

l. 20. having no general, etc., not having received any commission to preach any political gospel to the world in the way in which Christ's disciples were commissioned by him to preach Christianity everywhere. An *apostle* is literally a person sent, or charged with a mission. See note on p. 5, l. 34.

l. 28. equivocal, misleading. Englishmen are absolutely free to form any number of clubs and to call them by the most high-sounding titles. Foreigners, who do not know this, may easily imagine that a club has necessarily a representative character and a legal status.

l. 36. The House of Commons insists on seeing the signatures to a petition, that it may be able to judge of the character and weight of the petitioners.

P. 7, l. 1. sneaking, the word signifies *underhand, mean, contemptible*: lit. to *sneak* is to *creep* or *slink away*, like a man who is ashamed to be seen.

l. 3. presence-chamber, properly the room in which the Sovereign gives audience. Here it means the Chamber in which the Assembly sat, as representing the sovereign people.

l. 15. instrument, document: a legal term.

l. 18. lead, prominence. It expresses the position of a man whom others follow. It is a favourite word with Burke. Cf. "Having a momentary lead, I did my country some service."

l. 20. refined, subtle: clever, in the bad sense of the term.

l. 27. manly, worthy of men, as distinguished from animals. Cf. "rational liberty," p. 3, l. 16. Burke would not give liberty to those who would use it merely to degrade themselves to the level of the brutes by repudiating the obligations of morality, and the restraints which social life implies. Cf. p. 276, l. 30. Elsewhere Burke says that liberty is a good, only when it is connected with order. He defines it as "social freedom," and "the liberty which is secured by equality of restraint."

l. 29. I have given, Burke was, at different times in his career, opposed to different enemies: sometimes to the king and the king's friends: sometimes to democrats: sometimes to Ministers: sometimes to an arbitrary majority in Parliament—but always

for the same reason, viz. : that each of his opponents in turn endeavoured to impose unjust restraints or to withdraw just ones. The consistency of true statesmanship is not a mere formal consistency. The consistent statesman may often have to appear on different sides, and in support of apparently opposite measures. But that is only because his old party may fall away from him, or former opponents may come up to him, and because in combinations of circumstances radically opposed the same end will naturally be secured by opposite means. Liberalism, for instance, means the rejection of inequalities and privileges which cannot in reason be justified. But, inasmuch as the privileged classes are naturally a minority, men too easily fall into the mistake of supposing that the essence of Liberalism is concession to popular clamour. In his *Appeal to the old Whigs* Burke says, "He who thinks that the British Constitution ought to consist of the three members, of three very different natures, of which it does actually consist, and thinks it is his duty to preserve each of those members in its proper place, and with its proper proportion of power, must (as each shall happen to be attacked) vindicate the three several parts on the several principles peculiarly belonging to them. He cannot assert the democratic part on the principles on which monarchy is supported, nor can he support monarchy on the principles of democracy ; nor can he maintain aristocracy on the grounds of the one or of the other, or of both. All these he must support on grounds that are totally different, though practically they may be, and happily with us they are, brought into one harmonious body. A man could not be consistent in defending such various, and, at first view, discordant parts of a mixed constitution, without that sort of inconsistency with which Mr. Burke stands charged ... Whilst he opposes his defence on the part where the attack is made, he presumes, that for his regard to the just rights of all the rest, he has credit in every candid mind. He ought not to apprehend that his raising fences about popular privileges this day, will infer that he ought, on the next, to concur with those who would pull down the throne : because on the next he defends the throne, it ought not to be supposed that he has abandoned the rights of the people."

l. 35. metaphysical, ideal. Burke is thinking of the metaphysical distinction between matter and form. The distinction can be made in thought only. The ideas of a substance not qualitatively determined, and of qualities except as determining a substance, are mere abstractions. So, the idea of liberty, apart from the concrete realization of it in a given time and place, is a mere abstraction. It is a pure negation, signifying only the absence of restraints, and as such we cannot characterize it at all. Human nature being imperfect, the employment of force is necessary to the security of society. The kinds and degrees of

restraint required depend upon the history, the character, and the circumstances of particular societies.

P. 8, l. 2. *its distinguishing colour*, etc., its special character. Except with reference to a society, to which it is proposed to grant liberty, we cannot predicate either goodness or badness of it.

l. 5. *government*, used, in opposition to liberty, in the general sense of control by law. Cf. l. 33.

l. 18. *to the galleys*, It was the practice to man ships called *galleys* with condemned criminals.

l. 19. *the metaphysic Knight*, Don Quixote, the hero of the famous story by the Spanish Cervantes (born 1547). He is represented as a country gentleman of La Mancha, so crazed by long reading the most famous books of chivalry, that he actually went forth into the world, like the heroes of his favourite romances, to succour the oppressed and avenge the injured. Burke calls him *metaphysic* because he is represented in one case as having assisted some prisoners to escape, thus showing himself an advocate of liberty *in the abstract*, and without reference to the use that was likely to be made of it. As a matter of fact, the released prisoners turned upon their deliverer.

l. 23. The excitement into which people are thrown by the acquisition of liberty may be compared to the effervescence of liquors charged with carbonic acid gas; and, just as we cannot pass judgment on the liquor until the effervescence has subsided, so we cannot pronounce upon the effects of liberty until the first excitement has worn off, and the people have settled down into some sort of order. "Fixed air" was then the scientific term for carbonic acid gas. Mr. Payne says that the name was given to it by Dr. Black, in 1755, on account of its property discovered by him of readily losing its elasticity and fixing itself in many bodies, particularly those of a calcareous kind.

l. 29. *Flattery corrupts*, etc. It breeds a habit of insincerity in the giver, and blinds the receiver to a sense of his faults. Cf. the saying of Solomon, *Faithful are the wounds of a friend*. We are accustomed to think of flattery as addressed by individuals to kings or great men: but open and public flattery (adulation) of a people is also possible, and is equally pernicious.

l. 34. *public force*, the effective subordination of individuals to the general will. •

l. 35. *revenue*, See p. 256.

l. 36. *solidity*, stability.

P. 9, l. 1. *civil and social manners*, decency and refinement in public and private life.

l. 7. *complaints*, viz. : of the use which they have made of their liberty.

l. 8. *insulated*, the same word as *isolated*. It means separated, as *island* (Lat. *insula*) is from other lands.  $\eta$

l. 9. *considerate*, thoughtful. We use the term to describe a man who is careful not to offend or injure others.

l. 10. *declare themselves*, commit themselves to an opinion.

l. 14. *the scene*, literally the stage on which a play is acted : then, generally, the place where an event takes place : then the event itself. Burke alludes to the prevalent belief that the Duke of Orleans was really the prime mover, though he did not appear. Cf. p. 51, l. 4.

l. 16. *transcendental*. lofty. Literally the word means 'surpassing others.' In the language of modern philosophy it is used to denote the principles which are necessary to account for experience though they are not derived from experience. Not unnaturally it has come to signify in popular language 'what has no foundation in experience,' so that it is often used as equivalent to 'fantastical,' or 'mystical.' We now use the form *transcendent* to express the meaning which Burke expresses by *transcendental*.

l. 18. *the country*, used to denote any part of England except London, which is called 'town,' as in line 20. *from whence*, *from* is superfluous, as the word *whence* alone signifies 'from what or which place or source.' The expression is not uncommon. Cf. "Oh ! how unlike the place from whence they fell !" — *Milton*.

l. 20. *an account*, etc. Mr. Payne gives the full title of this publication, 'A Discourse on the Love of our Country, delivered on November 4, 1789, at the Meeting House in Old Jewry to the Society for commemorating the Revolution in Great Britain. With an Appendix containing the Report of the Committee of the Society; an account of the population of France; and the Declaration of Right by the National Assembly of France. Third Edition, with additions to the Appendix, containing communications from France occasioned by the Congratulatory Address of the Revolution Society to the National Assembly of France, with the Answers to them. By Richard Price, D.D., LL.D., F.R.S.' etc. The letter of the Duke of Rochefoucault is an informal one addressed to Dr. Price, and dated December 2, 1789. That of the Archbishop of Aix (as President of the National Assembly) formally addressed to Lord Stanhope, as Chairman of the Society, and dated December 5, 1789, was accompanied by an official extract from the Proceedings of the Assembly, dated November 25, 1789. The appendix also contains Resolutions of thanks sent to the Society from Dijon and Lille, together with the Answers transmitted to them by the Society. The student should notice the many passages in the

book which show Burke's fear lest the conduct of the French might lead to revolutionary disturbances in England and elsewhere. The doctrine of 'natural rights' had no special reference to French citizens. Cf. p. 10, l. 19.

l. 29. *credit*, power of borrowing.

l. 31. *polity*, a Greek word signifying the organization of the *polis*, or state.

l. 33. If the *prudence*, etc. There are times when it is both inexpedient and unbecoming for a man to say out all that he thinks. But in face of a pressing danger, the advantages of a timely warning outweigh every other consideration.

l. 34. *decorum*, cf. Bacon, Essay vi., "Nakedness is uncomely, as well in mind as body: and it addeth no small reverence to men's manners and actions, if they be not altogether open."

P. 10, l. 3. *to heap mountains*, Burke is thinking of the Titans, or giants, of Greek mythology, who impiously attempted, by piling three mountains of Thessaly one upon another, to make for themselves a road by which they could reach and attack Jupiter in heaven.

l. 4. *Whenever*, etc.,

"Nam tua res agitur paries cum proximus ardet,  
Et neglecta solent incendia sumere vires."

"No time for sleeping with a fire next door;  
Neglect such things, they only blaze the more."

Horace, *Ep.* 1. 18. 84.

l. 11. *more largely*, cf. the second paragraph of Burke's introductory note, p. 2.

l. 16. *formal method*, logical arrangement.

l. 26. *out of nature*, By *nature* we understand that system of unvarying relations which science and history show to exist between objects and events. To Burke the French Revolution seemed inexplicable by natural causes. He regarded it as one would regard some sudden reversal of the order of the physical universe. The ordinary relations between events seemed altered. Experience warrants us in expecting great causes for great events. In France events have followed from antecedents which our experience of the order of nature would have led us to regard as quite insufficient to account for them. Similarly human passions appear to have been quite capricious in their working and effects. It is important to keep this passage in mind. Burke was not likely to be a dispassionate critic of a phenomenon which he regarded with such perplexity and horror. We shall find many passages in the book in which Burke overlooks the distinction, which in other places he insists upon, and which Aristotle emphasized, between the occasions and the causes of revolutions. Bacon,

talking of seditions, says wisely, "The surest way to prevent seditions (if the times do bear it) is to take away the matter of them. For if there be fuel prepared, it is hard to tell whence the spark shall come that shall set it on fire."—*Essay* 15. He says the same thing again in *Essay* 19.

P. 11, l. 3. **secular applause**, as distinguished from *sacred eloquence*, i.e., the eulogy passed on it in Dr. Price's sermon, which is a discourse delivered in a church, as part of a religious service. **dashing Machiavelian**, bold and unscrupulous. Machiavelli was a Florentine by birth. Perhaps the most famous of his writings is 'The Prince,' published in 1516. It is the result of his observations and experience as to the arts by which power can be won and maintained. Machiavelli is unfairly charged with the immorality which characterized the statecraft of the time: so that Machiavellism has come to signify the unscrupulous use of fraud and violence for selfish ends. Cf. "Am I politic? Am I subtle? Am I a Machiavel?"—*Merry Wives of Windsor*, iii. 1. 103: and,

"I can add colours to the chameleon,  
Change shapes with Proteus for advantages,  
And set the murderous Machiavel to school."

—3 *Henry VI.* iii. 2. 191 :

and again in 1 *Henry VI.* v. 4, when the Maid of Orleans declares that she is with child by Alençon, the Duke of York exclaims "Alençon, that notorious Machiavel!"

l. 7. **non-conforming**, equivalent to dissenter, see p. 5, l. 29. A 'meeting-house' is the technical name for a dissenting place of worship. Dr. Price was a dissenting minister (1723-1791). His theological writings gained him the friendship and patronage of Lord Shelburne, a political opponent of Burke. He was well known also as a writer on financial and political questions. He wrote on the subject of the National Debt, on population, and on the proper method of calculating the values of contingent reversions. He wrote also in opposition to the war with America. He was offered the position of private secretary to the premier, Lord Shelburne.

l. 8. **the Old Jewry**, the name of a street in the city of London.

l. 12. **porridge**, another form of *pottage*. Originally it meant a dish of herbs. Here it means a mixture.

l. 13. **the grand ingredient**, the chief topic of the sermon. Burke is thinking of the unsavoury stew which the witches are represented as brewing in a cauldron in *Macbeth*, Act iv. Sc. 1.

l. 17. **It was moved**, the address was proposed. The 'principles of the sermon' are given on pp. 14 *seqq.* Those who approved Price's theory of government naturally were

delighted by the Declaration of the Rights of Man in the French Assembly.

1. 18. **reeking**, literally, smoking hot from : i.e. fresh from the influence of.

1. 25. **literary caballers**, etc., notice the inversion—intriguers who make use of literature, and men of letters who engage in intrigues : men who apply theology to politics, and politicians who busy themselves with theology. Price was a 'political theologian' : the 'lay-divines' (p. 12, l. 29) were 'theological politicians.'

1. 28. **oracle**, the word oracle means properly a divinely inspired utterance. There were several places in Greece where Apollo was believed to answer, through the mouth of a priestess, questions put by those who went to consult the oracle. On one occasion Demosthenes, the Athenian statesman and great opponent of Philip of Macedon, insinuated that the priestess *Philippized*, implying that the oracle was a mere political instrument in the hands of Philip, the answers of the priestess being contrived to support his interests and further his designs. The literary caballers, etc., paid the same respect to the utterances of Dr. Price that the Greeks did to the words of the oracle, and naturally, because all that he said furthered their designs and harmonized with their principles. **with the best intentions**, Burke does not charge Price, as Demosthenes charged the oracle, with deliberately playing into the hands of a party.

1. 29. **his prophetic song**, the answers of the oracle were delivered in verse. The expression, therefore, is appropriate to describe the sermon of Dr. Price, who is compared to the oracle.

1. 33. **a predecessor**, he resembled him in being a dissenting minister, and in the character of his opinions. Mr. Payne notes that the term reverend, as a conventional title for a clergyman, dates from some time after Peters, and is, therefore, applied to him derisively.

1. 35. **the king's own chapel**, the fact of its being delivered in the king's own chapel made the insult the greater. Cf. p. 73, l. 4.

1. 36. **the Saints**, The Puritans arrogated this title to themselves. Puritanism was a protest against the ungodliness of the world.

P. 12, l. 5. **your league in France**, The Holy League was organized in 1576 by the Duke of Guise, nominally in defence of the Catholic religion, but really to secure the succession of Catholics to the French throne.

1. 6. **league and covenant**, made between England and Scotland

during the war between Charles I. and the Parliament. See Green's *Short History of the English People*, pp. 533-4.

l. 10. **politics and the pulpit**, political discussion is out of place in the pulpit. Burke argues, first, that the passion of partizanship is inseparable from politics, while it is alien to the spirit of the Christian religion; secondly, that clergymen have not that knowledge of men and affairs which is necessary to the politician.

l. 12. **charity**, this is the virtue upon which Christianity specially insists. It includes not only the performance of kind acts, but slowness to take offence, and the habit of putting the most kindly interpretation upon what others do and say. **healing**, envy, hatred, and malice are the diseases of society, and are cured by charity.

l. 24. **pulpit style**, style of preaching. The word 'pulpita' in Latin meant a raised stage or platform. It is used now merely for the raised place in a church from which sermons are delivered.

l. 28. **supposed high**, etc. Price had spoken in terms of praise of a theological pamphlet of which the Duke of Grafton, Chancellor of the University of Cambridge, was supposed, and rightly, to be the author. Burke calls him a *lay-divine*, because, though a layman, he wrote on theological subjects.

l. 29. **other lay-divines**, etc., such, for instance, as Price's own patron, Lord Shelburne, who was also a Unitarian.

l. 30. **may be**, the expression implies that it was not. 'It may be, though I do not see why or how.'

l. 31. **Seekers**, the name of a Puritan sect, of which Sir Harry Vane was the head, in the time of Cromwell. His leading principle was the denial of the right of any authority to enforce any system of religious truth and discipline. The word is appropriately applied to men whom Burke describes as going out of the Established Church, and trying to find the truth for themselves. **noble**, throughout the passage Burke emphasizes the incompatibility of their actual position as English peers with their assumed character of theologians. Cf. p. 13, ll. 10, 18, and 24.

l. 32. **staple**, material. Churches and their doctrines are compared to shops and the wares which they contain.

P. 13, l. 1. **dissenting**, see note on p. 5, l. 29.

l. 2. **non-conformity** means dissent. 'To improve upon non-conformity' means to go beyond the non-conformists: to push dissent to the extreme.

l. 3. **meeting-house**, see note on p. 11, l. 7.



1. 12. **rational and manly**, rational, because based on their own judgment: manly, because independent, and not accepted on authority.

1. 14. **calculating**, alluding to his financial writings. See note on p. 11, l. 7. The expression "great company," etc., is taken from the Prayer Book: though the second *great* is inserted ironically by Burke. "The Lord gave the word: great was the company of the preachers."—*Psalm*, lxxviii. 11.

1. 17. **hortus siccus**, a collection of dried plants. It is difficult to give an intelligible account even of the existing forms of dissent: the difficulty would become an impossibility if Dr. Price's principle were acted on. The words *valuable* and *beautify* are, of course, ironical.

1. 18. **noble duke**, etc. See note on p. 12, l. 31. The word *bold* is introduced purposely to hold up Price's proposition to ridicule. *Noble* is the title by which a peer is actually and properly referred to in speech or writing. But *bold* is merely a conventional epithet applied by poets and ballad writers to describe a baron, considered as a military leader: and no two characters can be further removed from one another than those of a warrior and a priest.

1. 20. **this town**, London, cf. p. 9, l. 18. People of wealth and position generally reside in London for some months in the year, which are called *the season*, a period naturally marked by a perpetual round of festivities.

1. 21. **vapid**, tasteless, insipid.

1. 22. **Mess-Johns**, parsons. Mess is a corruption of the Latin word *magister*, master.

1. 24. **are expected**, viz., by Dr. Price. See note on l. 25. The word *titled* is introduced to emphasize the incongruity of their social position and their teaching. For *pulpits*, see p. 12, l. 24.

1. 25. **the new evangelists**, 'the evangelists' are the writers of the four Christian Gospels. Burke describes these men as 'preachers of a new gospel,' viz.: that every one may believe and preach what he pleases. The word *evangelist* means properly 'a proclaimer of good news.' **disappoint the hopes**, etc., Burke insinuates that Price's great object in preaching this anarchical doctrine was to provoke an armed attack upon all secular and religious authorities, such as was made by the Puritans in Charles the First's time.

1. 27. **polemic**, they will not become soldiers as well as controversialists. *Polemos* is the Greek word for *war*. The English derivatives are used to denote not actual fighting, but discussion.

1. 29. blessed, ironical. It was the epithet by which the Puritans themselves would describe the days of their power.

P. 14, l. 2. these few, etc., notice the irony of the sentence. Burke says, I only ask that those who claim freedom for themselves will not force me to join them, and that they will not abuse their freedom by disturbing social order. The words *intolerance* and *despotism* refer respectively to religious and civil freedom in l. 1. There is no intolerance in asking equal freedom of belief and worship for all: there is nothing despotic in the prohibition of military revolts.

Pp. 14-17. Dr. Price in his sermon asserts that the English king is almost the only sovereign in the world whose title to his throne is good, because he alone reigns by the choice of his people. As a matter of fact, however, the king of England's title to govern is just as good or just as bad as that of any other ruler. The people are willing that he should rule, but they did not elect him. The effect of Dr. Price's teaching, therefore, so far as it has any effect, is to weaken the hold of the English crown on the loyalty of the subjects. In fact he positively asserts that the English people in 1688 acquired the right of choosing their rulers, of dismissing them for misconduct, and of deciding how they should be ruled. As a matter of fact, these so-called rights are not only not wished for by the English people, but the assertion of them is a violation of the laws made in 1688.

In the following passage, down to p. 36, Burke considers the position and power of king, parliament, and people, simply from the point of view of a lawyer. The authors of the Revolution of 1688, however, appealed to first principles, not to the facts and theories of English law. They argued that, whatever might be the position of the king, as defined and determined by English law and precedent, he had no longer any claim upon the allegiance of the English people, because he had violated the terms of the original contract between ruler and people. The principles of the Revolution were the principles of Locke's *Civil Government*. The King was deposed because he could no longer justify his authority as being for the public good. The state of affairs contemplated by Locke as justifying insurrection, namely, the abuse by the king of his fiduciary power, had arisen. He was, as Hallam says, "an enemy whose resentment could never be appeased, and whose power consequently must wholly be taken away." The absolute right and paramount prerogative of the king, therefore, which Burke declares, and perhaps rightly, to have been a part of the Constitution, were simply denied by the authors of the Revolution. By breaking the line of succession they also denied the doctrine of hereditary right, and made the tenure of the crown conditional upon good behaviour. William

would not have been chosen, if his election had not been desirable politically. The possibility of a fresh election of a sovereign by a subsequent Parliament in consequence of a failure of heirs was evidently contemplated by those who drew up the instrument under which William ascended the throne. The Revolution therefore entirely changed the spirit of the Constitution, though, for obvious reasons, old forms were changed as little as possible. "It reduced the monarchy to an integrant portion, instead of the primary source and principle of our constitution. The rights of the actual monarch, of the reigning family, were made to emanate from the Parliament and the people." Hallam, *Constitutional History*, Vol. iii. : and Green, *Short History of the English People*, p. 673.

l. 7. *Oh! that*, etc., After describing a ridiculous piece of folly on the part of the Emperor Domitian, the Roman satirist Juvenal expresses the wish that the whole of his reign had been devoted to such trifling, instead of to the cruelty which actually disfigured it. *Sat.* iv. 150.

l. 9. **fulminating bull**, Dr. Price's sermon is a virtual sentence of deposition on all sovereigns, and is therefore compared to the sentence of excommunication and deposition sometimes passed by the popes, as, for instance, on King John of England. The Latin word *bulla* was used for 'a leaden seal,' and so came to mean the proclamation to which the seal was attached. 'Fulminating' means, literally, 'thundering,' and so 'violent' or 'threatening.' With the whole passage we may compare what Bacon, in one of his charges, says of the Anabaptists—"They prefer the putting down of magistrates: and they can chant the psalm, *To bind their kings in chains, and their nobles in fetters of iron*. This is the glory of the saints, much like the temporal authority that the Pope challengeth over princes."

l. 10. **in its vital parts**, the acceptance of his doctrine would be fatal to the constitution.

l. 15. **this archpontiff**, literally this supreme priest, or pope. The pope, in virtue of his position as God's representative on earth, claimed the right to pronounce upon the title of sovereigns to reign. Dr. Price assumes the same right, and authoritatively proclaims that the rule of an unelected sovereign is a violation of man's natural right to choose whom he shall obey.

l. 17. **meridian fervour**, lit. noonday heat: i.e. at the time when it was most zealously put in practice. Innocent III., 1198-1216, passed sentence of excommunication on King John, and upon the Emperor Otho. He released the English from their allegiance, and offered the crown to the King of France.

l. 18. **sweeping**, comprehensive. **ban and anathema**, excom-

munication and curse. A ban had much the same effect as putting a man out of caste in this country.

l. 21. apostolic missionaries, cf. p. 6, l. 20.

l. 23. a domestic interest, foreign sovereigns must provide for their own safety. Englishmen are interested so far as their own monarchy is concerned.

l. 24. the solidity, whether it is well-founded.

l. 28. is nonsense, explained on p. 15, l. 29, "they will perhaps tell us," etc.

l. 29. unfounded, etc., it is not true (p. 16, l. 13), its acceptance would lead to disloyalty, if not to rebellion (p. 15, l. 21), it is opposed to the law of England (p. 17, l. 13), and to the spirit of the constitution (p. 21, l. 23).

l. 30. this spiritual doctor, this clergyman who takes upon himself to teach politics. See note on p. 12, l. 10.

P. 15, l. 2. gang, notice the skill with which the words are chosen. A *gang* is used only with reference to criminals.

l. 3. miserable, because, if Dr. Price be right, all nations are subjected to a domination which cannot be justified.

l. 5. The policy, the object aimed at.

l. 6. so qualified, with the limitation in favour of the English king.

l. 7. political gospel, cf. p. 13, l. 25.

l. 14. pickled, literally preserved; when once recorded in the printed sermon, it could always be produced when wanted.

l. 17. I search, etc., The quotation is from the Roman poet Horace, *Ep.* i. l. 12.

l. 19. is soothed, the English government is lulled into security, by being told that the doctrine does not affect it, though in reality it does. All the time, the position of the government is weakened, for one at any rate among our motives to loyalty is our belief in the right of the government to govern us, and this right is, by Dr. Price's teaching, denied.

l. 27. constructions, interpretations.

l. 34. render their proposition safe, not be obliged to abandon their doctrine, as they would be, if it were inconsistent with facts. nugatory, meaningless: lit. trifling.

l. 35. They are welcome to, No one will envy a man who is obliged to plead folly as an excuse for his wrong-doing.

P. 16, l. 3. derived, and, therefore, Burke implies, not elective.

1. 5. at some time, etc. Amongst the German tribes sovereignty, in early times, resided in the whole body of the free men. Permanent kingship was an extension of what was originally a mere temporary and voluntary submission to a leader in war.

1. 20. electoral college, he refers to the nine persons who elected to the German Empire, or, as it was called, the Holy Roman Empire, founded by Charlemagne. The Imperial Crown was always in theory elective, but down to the thirteenth century it was practically hereditary, though, as in other feudal kingdoms, the consent of the nobles and people, and, later on, of the chief nobles only, was required before the son could succeed the father. But from the thirteenth century onwards the throne was in the gift of a small electoral college, consisting first of seven, then of eight, and finally of nine princes. Francis VI. resigned the imperial title in 1806.

1. 32. bottom, etc., rest upon, and are deducible from. Cf. p. 29, l. 4.

1. 34. a mere rant, etc., it is not a mere rhetorical phrase employed to flatter the people. Cf. p. 8, l. 29.

P. 17, l. 2. compose one system, each implies the others. The word system denotes an organic whole, not a mere aggregate of things.

1. 8. unheard-of, Burke means that it is entirely different from the actual Declaration and Bill of Rights drawn up at the Revolution. Yet with regard to the latter, Green says:—"The Declaration of Right was turned into the Bill of Rights, and the passing of this measure in 1689 restored to the monarchy the character which it had lost under the Tudors and the Stuarts. The right of the people through its representatives to depose the king, to change the order of succession, and to set on the throne whom they would, was now established. All claim of Divine Right, or hereditary right independent of the law, was formally put an end to by the election of William and Mary. Since their day no English sovereign has been able to advance any claim to the crown save a claim which rested on a particular clause in a particular Act of Parliament. William, Mary, and Anne, were sovereigns simply by virtue of the Bill of Rights—George I. and his successors have been sovereigns solely by virtue of the Act of Settlement. An English monarch is now as much the creation of an Act of Parliament as the pettiest taxgatherer in his realm. A limitation of the right of succession which expressed this parliamentary origin of the sovereign's right in the strongest possible way was found in the provision "that whosoever shall hereafter come to the possession of this crown shall join in communion with the Church of England as

by law established." *Short History of the English People*, p. 673.

l. 12. **lives and fortunes**, Mr. Payne points out that this is a very ancient formula, and that it is used in the eighth section of the Bill of Rights, which explains Burke's reference to 'the laws of their country made at the time of the Revolution' in the following sentence.

Pp. 17-29. *The Revolution, so far from establishing the right of the people to elect a king, fixed the succession in the monarchy for all time, such firmly being then regarded as necessary to secure the rights of the people. Having determined to get rid of James, Parliament and people might have asserted a right to elect a king, yet they deliberately deviated as little as possible from the direct line of succession: and the throne of William and Mary was in state documents called the throne of their ancestors. Moreover, the Parliament of the day bound their posterity for ever to obey the legitimate Protestant successors of William and Mary. Though free literally, yet they did not think they were free morally to choose at will. They even consented to accept a foreign ruler rather than abandon the constitutional principle of hereditary succession. The power to make a change in the constitution can only be exercised when it is necessary to preserve the constitution. If none but elected kings are lawful kings, then all the acts of all the sovereigns before 1688 are illegal. The very fixing of the succession at the Revolution is fatal to the idea that it was an assertion of the elective principle. The Princess Sophia was chosen, not for her administrative skill, but for her hereditary claim.*

l. 17. **Old Jewry**, cf. p. 11, l. 8, and p. 21, l. 9. Burke quotes with approval the saying that the Revolution of 1688 was, really, a revolution not made but prevented.

l. 18. **which happened**, etc., the reference is to the execution of Charles I., and the establishment of the Commonwealth.

l. 20. **before their eyes**, etc., they are so constantly thinking of, and are so attracted by. The heart is the seat of feeling. Cf. p. 21, l. 33, *engraved in our hearts*, i.e. fixed in our affections.

l. 23. **We must recall**, etc. If we would know what they really thought, we must look at what they really did. For the *Declaration of Right*, see p. 17, l. 8.

l. 29. **warm, impassioned**. We use the term *cool* in the sense of deliberate, calm, unbiassed.

l. 30. **a general right**, a universal right, as distinguished from one which exists only under special circumstances. The right to elect in all cases is not proved by the fact of election in an

exceptional case. Yet this is practically, Burke says, what Dr. Price contends. On p. 23, l. 6, he calls this argument a piece of *metaphysic sophistry*, i.e. logical jugglery, or a deliberate attempt to mislead men by the employment of vague generalities. See note on p. 8, l. 19. •

l. 33. the 1st of William, etc., The number prefixed to the Sovereign's name shows the year of the reign in which the enactment was passed. The number following the name with c. or ch. (chapter) before it shows the number of the statute in the sequence of enactments of that year. Cf. p. 20, l. 7 : p. 26, l. 15 : p. 30, l. 17. Sometimes, as in this case, it is also stated in what session of the Parliament the statute was passed.

l. 35. fundamental, essential to its existence, in the same way as the foundations are to the building which they support. Cf. 'vital parts,' p. 14, l. 10. Cf. p. 27, l. 17.

P. 18, l. 4. declared in one body, this is the literal meaning of *incorporated*, l. 17.

l. 6. A few years after, etc., "The death of the last living child of the Princess Anne was followed in 1701 by the passing of an Act of Settlement which, setting aside not only the pretended Prince of Wales and a younger daughter of James II., but the Duchess of Savoy, a daughter of Henrietta of Orleans, and other claimants nearer in blood, as disqualified by their profession of the Catholic religion, vested the right to the Crown in Sophia, Electress-dowager of Hanover, a child of the Queen of Bohemia and a grand-daughter of James I., and the heirs of her body, being Protestants."—Green, *Short History of the English People*, p. 688.

l. 13. the spurious, etc. What are asserted by Dr. Price and his friends to have been the guiding maxims of the statesmen of 1688, as opposed to their own undoubted declarations on the subject (*Oracles*, p. 18, l. 26). See note on p. 11, l. 28.

l. 27. countenancing, supporting. Cf. p. 19, l. 31. gipsy predictions, interpretations which are as worthless as the prophecy of a gipsy.

l. 29. demonstration, absolute certainty. The terms *demonstration* and *demonstrative* are applied to reasonings which contain no element of hypothesis.

l. 30. from turning, etc., from enforcing in all cases what was unavoidable in one. •

P. 19, l. 2. A privilege, a legal term signifying an enactment which affects certain individuals only. Such, for instance, are government orders exempting individuals from the provisions of the Arms Act.

l. 14. undoubtedly his, the legitimacy of the prince born in 1688 was denied.

l. 17. a choice, this is not an argument, but a mere playing with words. *Choice* is used in two senses. In plain English the sentence would run thus, 'the English did not elect William until it became practically impossible to continue living under James.'

l. 21. moral, opposed to *physical*. Cf. below, l. 31. It implies not that actual force is used, but that circumstances are such as to drive us to a particular course.

l. 27. Lord Somers (1652-1715) was the eldest son of an attorney in Worcester. He was called to the bar, and, as junior counsel for the defence in the trial of the seven Bishops, he established his reputation as an orator and a constitutional lawyer. He was one of the managers for the Commons in the conferences which took place between the two Houses as to the policy to be adopted towards James II., and he was chairman of the committee which drew up the Declaration of Right. In 1689 he was made Solicitor-General. He was knighted, and, shortly afterwards became Attorney-General. In 1693 he was appointed Lord Keeper and a Privy Councillor. He took a prominent part in all legal and constitutional questions, and was one of the seven administrators of the kingdom during William's absence from England in 1695. In 1697 he was made Lord Chancellor, and was raised to the peerage. During the years 1699 and 1700 various charges were brought against him by his political opponents, and though they were unsuccessful, William thought it advisable to ask him to resign. In 1701 he was again impeached, but the Lords dismissed the charge. On the death of William he retired into private life. But in 1706 he was one of the managers of the union with Scotland, and when the Whigs returned to power, he was made President of the Council, and held the office until 1710. During the closing years of his life he was almost imbecile. drew, we should say 'drew up.'

l. 29. address, skill, tact.

l. 30. solution of continuity, a break in the direct line of succession.

l. 34. dry, unadorned, unattractive.

P. 20, l. 8. James the First, Hallam says that on the accession of James I. it was the first measure of Parliament to pass an act of recognition. acknowledging that immediately on the decease of Elizabeth "the imperial crown of the realm of England did, by inherent birthright and lawful and undoubted succession, descend and come to his most excellent majesty. as being lineally, justly, and lawfully next and sole heir of the blood royal of this realm." —*History of England*, ch. vi.



12. declaratory statutes, acts in which facts are stated, as opposed to orders. Thus in this country (India) government frequently enunciate their policy in public documents, or preface orders with preliminary statements of objects and reasons.

1. 19. well-wrought, effectual. It is the opposite of *flimsy*.

1. 21. meliorated, cf. p. 5, l. 2.

1. 24. relax the nerves of, weaken. The strength of a monarchy is in proportion to its independence.

1. 26. declaratory statutes, "Both Mary and Elizabeth, though they had been pronounced illegitimate by Act of Parliament, were afterwards called to the throne by the statute of the thirty-fifth of Henry VIII. Mary, on her accession, had been careful to wipe away the stain of illegitimacy, by procuring in her first parliament a confirmation of her mother's marriage, and a repeal of all statutes or judgments by which it had been impeached. Was Elizabeth to imitate her sister? Her advisers preferred to leave both the act which declared the marriage of Henry with Anne Boleyn void from the beginning, and that which convicted the latter of incest, adultery, and treason, uncontradicted on the statute-book, and had recourse to an act of recognition, which, with happy ambiguity of language, blended together her presumed right from her royal descent with that which she derived from the statute. . . It declared that she was, and ought to be rightful and lawful queen, rightly, lineally, and lawfully descended and come of the blood royal, to whom, and the heirs of her body lawfully to be begotten, the royal estate, place, crown, and dignity, with all its titles and appurtenances, belonged, as rightfully as they ever did to her father, brother, and sister, since the act of succession passed in the thirty-fifth of Henry VIII.; and then enacted that this recognition, in union with the limitation in that statute, should be the law of the realm for ever."—Lingard, *History of England*, vol. v. p. 7.

1. 35. a rubric, a recognized formula. It means literally 'a direction written in red.' It is used, as it was in Latin, to describe the titles of statutes in law books. But it is generally applied now to the directions for conducting the service in the prayer book. The Latin word *rubrica* (a rubric) meant properly *red chalk*.

P. 21, l. 4. title, a legal right. Notice that the word is used in this sense throughout the argument.

1. 16. spiritual and temporal, the bishops and the lay peers who together constitute the House of Lords.

1. 18. for ever, this argument is ridiculed by Paine in his answer to Burke. Mr. Payne points out that the words are mere surplusage, as in the expression 'heirs for ever,' in relation

to private property. Parliament has the power to settle ~~the~~ the succession to the crown, but, of course, subsequent generations would, under the same circumstances, be justified in acting as the authors of the Revolution of 1688 did.

l. 20. the limitation, viz. to Protestants.

l. 27. value, pride themselves.

l. 28. on their whig principles, i.e. on being champions of liberty as against tyranny, as the Whigs were in 1688. Mr. Payne remarks that the mere title-page of Lord Somers' *Judgment of whole Kingdoms and Nations*, which affirms "the Right of the People and Parliament of Britain to resist and deprive their kings for evil government" is a sufficient answer to this tirade.

l. 31. to read in, to find in. Cf. the expression to read between the lines, i.e. to find in any writing more than the words actually express.

l. 32. mysteries, hidden meaning.

l. 33. penetrating, incisive. in our hearts, cf. p. 17, l. 20. In the year 1558 Calais, which had been in the possession of England for two hundred years, was recovered by France. Mary, Queen of England, felt this so much that she is reported to have said that when she died the word 'Calais' would be found written on her heart.

l. 35. with, we should say by.

l. 36. in some sense, i.e. there was no power strong enough to prevent them. In another sense, viz., morally, they were not free.

P. 22, l. 5. their commission, the power entrusted to them.

l. 6. abstract, without reference to the dictates of reason, the obligations of morality, etc. What they may do, is one thing: what they ought to do, is another. Even an absolute ruler does not follow the caprice of the moment, but subjects his inclination to the demands of reason, morality, and expediency.

l. 20. The engagement, etc., cf. "The constitution of the legislative is the first and fundamental act of society, whereby provision is made for the continuation of their union under the direction of persons and bonds of laws, made by persons authorized thereunto, by the consent and appointment of the people, without which no one man, or number of men, amongst them can have authority of making laws that shall be binding to the rest."—Locke.

l. 23. obliged, bound.

l. 24. who derive, etc., whose well-being is affected by.

l. 27. Otherwise, etc., might would be right.

1. 32. **statute law**, cf. p. 25, l. 7, signifies laws made and passed by Parliament, as distinguished from the universal or customary law of the land (the common law). Blackstone divides the civil law of England into *statute law* and *common law*. The latter, he says, consists of (1) general customs, which are the common law strictly so-called; (2) particular customs, prevailing in certain districts; and (3) laws used in particular courts. The first is the law by which "proceedings and determinations in the king's ordinary courts of justice are guided and directed." That the elder son alone is heir to his ancestor, that a deed is of no validity unless sealed and delivered, are examples of common law doctrines "not set down in any written statute or ordinance, but depending on immemorial usage for their support." The validity of these usages is to be determined by the judges. The English common law system may be described as a pre-eminently national system. Based on Saxon customs, moulded by Norman lawyers, and jealous of foreign systems, it is, as Bacon says, as mixed as our language, and as truly national.—*Encyclopædia Brit.* s.v. Common Law.

1. 33. **not changing**, etc., the phraseology is suggested by one of the Christian *creeds*.

P. 23, l. 6. **metaphysic sophistry**, see note on p. 17, l. 30.

1. 11. **if we take**, etc., if we estimate what we are entitled to do by what our forefathers actually did.

1. 13. **peccant**, offending. Lat. *peccare*, to sin.

1. 22. **correction**, the remedying of defects.

1. 25. **the bond of union**, viz. the monarch.

1. 31. **states**, viz. the two Houses of Parliament.

1. 32. **the organic molecule**, etc., they did not break up the organic whole of the state into the elements or atoms which compose it. The state is not a mere aggregate of individuals, but exists in the mutual relations and interactions of parts, each of which implies every other.

1. 34. **tender**, sensitive.

P. 24, l. 10. **after the conquest**, William Rufus, Henry I., Stephen, and John, all superseded the direct heir (heir *per stirpem*) of the deceased sovereign. The people claimed and exercised the right to elect *per capita*, i.e. from the whole reigning family. See Green's *Short History of the English People*, pp. 98-9, and p. 197.

1. 16. **the inheritable principle**, etc., there was never any doubt that the heir should succeed, though there might be a doubt as to who the heir was.

1. 19. **the race**, etc., The quotation is from the Roman poet

Virgil, *Georg.* iv. 208. Virgil is describing the continuity of ~~the~~ community of bees.

l. 26. **the Society for Revolutions**, Burke implies that this is the title by which the Revolution Society should properly be called, because the object and tendency of its teaching is to excite revolt everywhere against the constituted authorities.

l. 34. **fictionitious**, because existing only in the minds of Dr. Price and his friends. Cf. *spurious*, p. 18, l. 13.

l. 36. **their predecessors**, to discredit the acts is as bad as to insult the bodies of past kings. He is alluding to the outrages perpetrated by some of the fanatical followers of Cromwell.

P. 25, l. 2. **to attain**, etc., to accuse them of exercising an authority to which they had no right, and so to invalidate all that they did.

l. 13. **de tallagio**, etc. He refers to the export duty on wool, one of the taxes which King Edward I. was obliged to surrender the right of levying.

l. 14. **petition of right**, confirmed by Charles I. in 1628. It is described in Green's *Short History of the English People*, pp. 486-7. *The Habeas Corpus Act* was passed in 1679. Its object was to secure men against arbitrary arrest and imprisonment.—Green, p. 647.

l. 15. **doctors, teachers**. Cf. p. 14, l. 30.

l. 18. **unqualified**, viz. by restriction to Protestants. p. 18, l. 20.

l. 20. **construed into**, interpreted to be. See foot-note to p. 29.

l. 21. **much trouble**, etc., If he had no right to reign at all, he might have been dismissed summarily.

P. 26, l. 8. **fastidiously**, the word means lit. with loathing or disgust. Generally the word *fastidious* signifies a person who is hard to please.

l. 35. **all storms**, etc., all the efforts made by the crown to encroach upon them. The word *prerogative* signifies the powers which the sovereign can exercise without reference to Parliament. *Privilege* means the rights of Parliament. Burke means that a continuous hereditary succession secures a continuous policy. A mere elected President, having no natural connection with his predecessor, might refuse to be bound by his predecessor's policy. It may easily happen that the election of a President is made the occasion of a struggle for supremacy between two rival parties, each with a distinct policy of its own. Cf. p. 28, l. 14.

P. 27, l. 5. **convulsive, spasmodic**, resembling the movement of a man in a fit. Violent change is no more necessary to a healthy state than medicine is to a healthy body.

1. 6. *habit, state.* Was it, etc., They would have preferred an Englishman to a foreigner: but they felt themselves bound to choose a foreigner with an hereditary right rather than an Englishman without one.

1. 17. *fundamental*, see note on p. 17, l. 35.

1. 23. *so capable, etc.*, so self-evident.

1. 29. *when set, etc.*, when men think that they can gain a momentary advantage by change, or when they feel in the humour for change. Cf. p. 36, l. 23.

1. 36. *the counterfeit wares, etc.* The Revolutionary message conveyed to France, and described as embodying the sentiments of Englishmen, though in reality Englishmen do not entertain them, is compared to goods exported to France and described as being English products, though in reality such as could not grow on English soil. The conveyance of the message to France through an improper channel (note on p. 5, l. 34) is compared to the exportation of goods in ships (bottoms) in which it is forbidden by law to export them. The approving reply of the French Assembly is compared to the stamp of a French manufacturer upon French goods imported into England. Here there is a double fraud. The opinions of Dr. Price are presented to France as approved by England, and to England as approved by France. There is an allusion to the fact that Paris sets the fashion to Europe in matters of dress, etc.

P. 28, l. 2. *illicit bottoms*, Burke is alluding to the Navigation Act, the object of which was "to give the sailors and shipping of Great Britain the monopoly of the trade of their own country, in some cases by absolute prohibitions, and in others by heavy burdens upon the shipping of foreign countries."—Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations*, Bk. iv., Ch. ii.

1. 6. *ape*, imitate, with an implication that the imitation is unnatural and awkward.

1. 9. *their rights, etc.*, as a blessing which it would be unjust to deprive them of, not as a grievance which they wish to get rid of. Cf. p. 18, l. 2.

1. 14. *stability*, see note on p. 26, l. 35.

1. 15. *members, parts.* The Latin word *membrum* means a limb.

1. 20. *invidious*, likely to bring odium on the person who undertakes it. It is not fair to represent a defender of legitimate constitutional monarchy as being a defender of tyranny. Those who do so are *sophisters*, i.e. they purposely use words with a view to deceive. The word *sophist* in Greek meant properly an expert. It came to be used in a special sense to describe a body of public teachers that arose in Athens.

On account of the shallowness and immorality which ~~were~~ supposed by some to characterize the teaching of these men, the word has acquired a sinister significance.

l. 21. in whose favour, etc., i.e. whom they represent you as defending.

l. 24. exploded, obsolete. It is a Latin word, signifying literally to hiss off the stage.

l. 27. fanatics, violent, unreasoning advocates. Like the Greek word *enthusiasm*, it signifies properly *inspired, transported by religious zeal*, and so, generally, *beside oneself, frenzied*. Burke is thinking of such treatises as the *Patriarcha* of Sir Robert Filmer, which was answered by Locke. "It was at this time that those strange theories which Filmer afterwards formed into a system, and which became the badge of the most violent class of Tories and high churchmen, first emerged into notice. It was gravely maintained that the Supreme Being regarded hereditary monarchy, as opposed to other forms of government, with peculiar favour; that the rule of succession in order of primogeniture was a divine institution, anterior to the Christian, and even to the Mosaic dispensation; that no human power, not even that of the whole legislature, no length of adverse possession, though it extended to ten centuries, could deprive a legitimate prince of his rights; that the authority of such a prince was necessarily always despotic; that the laws, by which, in England and in other countries, the prerogative was limited, were to be regarded merely as concessions which the sovereign had freely made, and might at his pleasure resume; and that any treaty which a king might conclude with his people was merely a declaration of his present intentions, and not a contract of which the performance could be demanded."—Macaulay, *History of England*, Ch. i.

l. 29. our new fanatics, etc., Dr. Price and his friends. It is just as onesided to maintain the absolute sovereignty of the people as it is to maintain the absolute sovereignty of the monarch,—to maintain that the king rules solely because it is the people's will, as to maintain that he can act in utter contempt and disregard of the people's will.

l. 31. prerogative, see note on p. 26, l. 35.

l. 33. impiously, "The doctrine that kingly government is peculiarly favoured by Heaven receives no countenance from the Old Testament; for in the Old Testament we read that the chosen people were blamed and punished for desiring a king, and that they were afterwards commanded to withdraw their allegiance from him. Their whole history, far from countenancing the notion that succession in order of primogeniture is of divine institution, would rather seem to indicate that younger brothers

and under the especial protection of heaven. . . . Nor does the system of Filmer receive any countenance from those passages of the New Testament which describe government as an ordinance of God: for the government under which the writers of the New Testament lived was not a hereditary monarchy. None of the Roman Emperors pretended to rule by right of birth; and in fact, both Tiberius, to whom Christ commanded that tribute should be given, and Nero, whom Paul directed the Romans to obey, were, according to the patriarchal theory of government, usurpers. In the Middle Ages the doctrine of indefeasible hereditary right would have been regarded as heretical: for it was altogether incompatible with the high pretensions of the Church of Rome. It was a doctrine unknown to the founders of the Church of England."—Macaulay.

35. *indefeasible*, absolute: which nothing can invalidate.

P. 29, l. 1. *which no civil*, etc. There is nothing which can be claimed as a right, without reference to the circumstances in which it is claimed. Rights are relative to positive law, and to considerations of expediency. See note on p. 7, l. 35.

l. 3. *prejudice*. The Latin word *præjudicium* meant a previous decision, which would, of course, be appealed to as a precedent, and would be decisive in parallel cases. So *to prejudice* means, as in the text, to decide the question against. Monarchy is not, any more than religion, or any other good thing, to be rejected because of the absurd reasons by which foolish persons have defended it. The words *prejudice* and *prejudiced* are now applied generally to persons who approach a matter with their minds already made up.

l. 4. *bottomed*, cf. p. 16, l. 32.

l. 6. *in which*, etc., of which they treat: lit. about which they are employed.

l. 9. *a false fact*, viz. that the English sovereign rules by the choice of the people. See p. 14, l. 31. *mischievous maxims*, viz.: the right of peoples generally to elect and dispose of their rulers.

Pp. 29-33. *The Revolution which aimed at a permanent constitutional settlement certainly did not justify the dismissal of sovereigns on the vague charge of misconduct. James was dismissed only because his conduct had rendered his retention absolutely impossible. Nor is the king the servant of the people in the sense of being accountable to them. He is 'our sovereign Lord' and is irresponsible. Dethronement can be effected only by war, not by statute. It is justified only by absolute necessity: and the circumstances under which such necessity arises admit of no precise definition.*

l. 16. **too guarded**, etc., expressed too cautiously and with ~~too~~ much of detail.

l. 29. **virtual**. the word signifies what is implied in, or may be inferred from an act or word, as opposed to what is actually said or done. The conduct of James was tantamount to abdication of the throne, since it violated the terms on which he accepted the throne.

P. 30, l. 3. **fundamental**, see note on p. 17, l. 35.

l. 6. **misconduct**, Burke reduces the argument to a mere question of words. Is misconduct a strong enough term to describe King James's violation of the English constitution and of the original contract? He allows that there is a degree of misconduct, or wrong doing, or illegality, which renders it practically impossible for a people to retain their king. **necessity**, cf. p. 19, l. 21.

l. 8. **Their trust**, etc. They acted on the maxim that prevention is better than cure. They hoped to render revolution unnecessary, by making it impossible that any king in the future should act in such a way as to justify a revolution. Cf. p. 30, l. 31 *seqq.*, and p. 32, l. 26 *seqq.*

l. 12. **the states**, cf. p. 23, l. 31.

l. 16. **aggravated**, used in its literal sense of 'increased the weight of.'

l. 24. **the popular representative**, the House of Commons. **the magnates**, etc., the House of Lords; cf. "This was the most noble and refined part of our constitution. The people, *by their representatives and grandees*, were entrusted with a deliberative power in making laws; the king with the control of his negative. The king was entrusted with the deliberative choice and the election to office; the people had the negative in a Parliamentary refusal to support. Formerly this power of control was what kept ministers in awe of Parliaments, and Parliaments in reverence with the people."—Burke, *Present Discontents*.

l. 25. **constitutional act**, the Act of Settlement passed in 1701.

l. 28. **no pardon**, etc. The king could not exempt a minister from prosecution by Parliament for unconstitutional action. The following passage from Green's *Short History of the English People*, pp. 680-2, explains and illustrates the text—"In outer seeming the Revolution of 1688 had only transferred the sovereignty over England from James to William and Mary. In actual fact it was transferring the sovereignty from the king to the House of Commons. From the moment when its sole right to tax the nation was established by the Bill of Rights, and when its own resolve settled the practice of granting none but annual supplies to the Crown, the House of Commons became the



supreme power in the state. It was impossible permanently to suspend its sittings, or, in the long run, to oppose its will, when either course must end in leaving the government penniless, in breaking up the army and navy, and in rendering the public service impossible. But though the constitutional change was complete, the machinery of government was far from having adapted itself to the new conditions of political life which such a change brought about. However powerful the will of the House of Commons might be, it had no means of bringing its will directly to bear upon the conduct of public affairs. The ministers who had charge of them were not its servants, but the servants of the Crown; it was from the king that they looked for direction, and to the king that they held themselves responsible. By impeachment or more indirect means the Commons could force a king to remove a minister who contradicted their will; but they had no constitutional power to replace the fallen statesman by a minister who would carry out their will. . . . Sunderland's counsel to the king was to recognize practically the new power of the Commons by choosing the ministers of the Crown exclusively from among the members of the party which was strongest in the Lower House. As yet no ministry, in the modern sense of the term, had existed. Each great officer of state, Treasurer, or Secretary, or Lord Privy Seal, had in theory been independent of his fellow-officers; each was the 'King's servant,' and responsible for the discharge of his special duties to the king alone. From time to time a minister, like Clarendon, might tower above the rest and give a general direction to the whole course of government, but the predominance was merely personal and never permanent; and even in such a case there were colleagues who were ready to oppose or even impeach the statesman who overshadowed them. It was common for a king to choose or dismiss a single minister without any communication with the rest; and so far from aiming at ministerial unity, even William had striven to reproduce in the Cabinet itself the balance of parties which prevailed outside it. Sunderland's plan aimed at replacing these independent ministers by a homogeneous ministry, chosen from the same party, representing the same sentiments, and bound together for common action by a sense of responsibility and loyalty to the party to which it belonged. . . . The new ministers ceased in all but name to be the king's servants. They became simply an Executive Committee representing the will of the majority of the House of Commons, and capable of being easily set aside by it and replaced by a similar Committee whenever the balance of power shifted from one side of the House to the other. Such was the origin of that system of representative government which has gone on from Sunderland's day to our own." Macaulay is equally clear as to the history of the ministry in England. Burke often insists on the value of impeachment as a safeguard of con-

stitutional liberty and good government. A people subject to irresponsible ministers is not more free than one subject to an absolute king: nor is the power of an absolute ministry less than that of an absolute monarch.

Pr 31, l. 4. *adulatory addresses*, cf. p. 8, l. 29.

l. 5. *fulsome*, disgusting, as is the taste of food to one who has eaten enough.

l. 8. *For*, considered as.

l. 11. *The slave*, etc., In the first act of the *Andria*, a play written by Terence, a Roman dramatist of the second century B.C., Simo reminds his freedman Sosia that he had once been his slave. To this Sosia replies, "In reminding me that I was a slave you seem to reproach me with forgetfulness of your kindness in giving me my freedom."

l. 15. *to bring himself*, the expression implies that it would require an effort.

l. 17. *style*, title. If the words '*Servant of the People*' were made part of the recognized official description of the French sovereign, as e.g. '*Defender of the Faith*' is in England, it is hard to see how any one would gain by it.

l. 18. *mended*, lit. how his or our condition would be improved. Cf. Bacon, "For otherwise whatsoever is new is unlooked for: and ever it *mends* some and pairs (impairs) others."—*Essay* 24.

l. 19. *Your most obedient*, etc., a conventional form of ending a letter becomes a mere form. It does not express, nor is it regarded by the recipient as expressing the real sentiments of the writer. Similarly a man's official title does not alter his character.

l. 20. *The proudest*, etc., viz. the Pope. Cf. p. 14, ll. 15 *seqq.*

l. 23. *Apostle*, See note on p. 6, l. 20.

l. 26. *the Fisherman*, St. Peter, whose successor in the bishopric of Rome the Pope is supposed to be, was originally a fisherman. Cf. "And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." *Matt.* iv. 18.

l. 28. *fippant vain*, silly and empty. I should have regarded it as no more than an objectionable mode of giving expression to the sentiment of freedom. Similarly on p. 16, l. 34, he says that the sermon cannot be regarded as "a mere rant of adulatory freedom." The word *unsavoury* means properly *unpleasant to the taste*.

l. 31. *In that light*, considered from that point of view.

P. 32, l. 6. **which knows**, etc., which is no respecter of persons.

l. 8. **humble**, ironical.

l. 11. **confused jargon**, etc., the language of Dr Price's sermon is as unintelligible to Englishmen as a foreign language. Cf. "wholly alien to our soil," p. 28, l. 3.

l. 12. **in him**, he is the representative of law, so that in obeying him we obey the law.

l. 14. **responsible**. The common law has not provided for the arraignment and trial of the sovereign, because the law and the sovereign are not separated.

l. 15. **the Justicia of Arragon**. He was the supreme judicial authority in the country. The office is not to be traced beyond 1118, and was not looked upon as fully equal to maintain public liberty against the crown until 1348, when such authority was given to the justiciary as proved eventually a more adequate barrier against oppression than any other country could boast. He held office for life: he could withdraw suits from the jurisdiction of the royal judges: it was penal to obtain letters from the king impeding the execution of his process: nor could any person be made to suffer for appealing to him for protection. Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ch. iv.

l. 25. **responsible to it**, ultimately, he is responsible, as we see for instance in the case of the Stuart sovereigns. Most writers who maintained the theory of contract agreed that the power of the executive is only a fiduciary power, though they differed as to the exact terms of the trust. There is at any rate this much of positive truth in the assertion, that there is a point beyond which no government can go in disregarding the feelings of the subjects. Putting positive contract out of the question, still acquiescence on the part of the people is one of the conditions of the tenure of power.

l. 27. **their fame**, the reputation which they actually enjoy. See note on p. 30, l. 8.

l. 33. **It will be time enough**, etc., Mr. Payne points out that Burke naturally hesitates to quote a provision of an Act of Charles II. for attainting the regicides, which runs thus:—"And be it hereby declared, that by the undoubted and fundamental laws of this kingdom, neither the Peers of this realm, nor the Commons, nor both together in Parliament or out of Parliament, nor the People collectively or representatively, nor any other Persons whatsoever, ever had, have, hath, or ought to have, any coercive power, over the persons of the kings of this realm."

P. 33, l. 1. **at their ease**, it is easy to talk of, but difficult to effect. We talk of 'arm-chair politicians.'

l. 3. **Laws are commanded**, etc. Cicero, in his speech in defence of Milo, ch. iv., says, "Homicide is by a law of nature justified in self-defence. When our life is threatened by violence, any mode of escape is honourable. For the laws hold their tongues against arms. Law does not require us to wait for it, when waiting would bring injustice upon us before we could appeal for redress." The Roman Marius is reported to have said that he could not hear the voice of the laws amid the din of battle.

l. 8. **Wars are just**, etc., quoted loosely from the Roman historian Livy, who defines necessary wars as wars undertaken by men whose only hope of safety lies in a recourse to arms.

l. 12. **out of the law**, force is appealed to when law fails. As law does not contemplate its own failure, it does not provide for contingencies in which it has failed. It is impossible to say in the abstract (speculative) where force is justifiable. When men's feelings are outraged, when there is no prospect of improvement, when there is a probability of successful resistance, and when the undoubted evils of civil war seem likely to be outweighed by the advantages which it promises, then men will appeal to arms.

l. 16. **agitated**, used like the Latin *agitare* in the sense of debated.

l. 18. **faint, obscure**, hard to discover. The word *faint* suggests the difficulty of reading words written in ink which has faded.

l. 20. **abused, perverted**. For instance, it was contrary to the spirit of the English constitution that the prerogative should be used as the Stuart kings attempted to use it. **indeed**, emphatic: to a very great extent. One of Burke's favourite charges against the authors of the French Revolution is that their resistance was made to concession. See p. 42, l. 22.

l. 25. **critical**, the word means literally 'decisive,' and so is applied to acts or occasions upon which much depends. **ambiguous**, of which the result is so uncertain. **bitter**, because, however successful it may be, a civil war must involve much suffering.

l. 26. **a potion**, used properly of a draught of medicine.

**distempered**, disordered, diseased. The word *temper* means to blend in due proportion: *distemper* signifies a disturbance of the proper proportion of elements in combination.

Pp. 33-38. *The Revolution did not establish the right of Englishmen to form their own Government. Its object and effect was to establish the old laws and constitution. A break with antiquity is and always has been repugnant to the genius of the English people. The principle of inheritance is the*

*basis of their whole political system. The crown, the peerage, and the liberties of the people, are all hereditary. It is a wise and natural principle. It secures to posterity the advantages which we possess, and while securing what is old does not exclude improvement. By thus submitting the state to the same law by which nature secures the existence of life, of families, and of possessions, Englishmen have associated the state in their affections with all that they hold most dear. Respect for antiquity is also a steadying and restraining force in politics. The fact that it is inherited gives a dignity to freedom. Englishmen respect their constitution as they respect a man of great age and high descent, and respect given on these grounds is freedom's surest guarantee.*

1. 34. the Old Jewry, p. 17, l. 17.

P. 34, l. 1. countenance, support. Cf. p. 18, l. 27.

1. 2. in precedent or principle, in the example which was set, or the rules that were followed.

1. 11. after-dinner, when they may be supposed to be somewhat excited with wine. Cf. p. 5, l. 31.

1. 14. authority, proof.

1. 19. to inoculate, graft, lit. to ingraft an eye or bud (Lat. *oculus*) of one plant into another.

1. 20. scion, a shoot (kalam). It is the exact equivalent of 'a cutting' (Latin, *secare*, to cut).

1. 24. upon analogical precedent, etc., in imitation of something which has been done in like case before.

1. 27. Sir Edward Coke, Chief Justice under James I. oracle, one who is an authority on legal matters. See note on p. 11, l. 28.

1. 28. Blackstone, born 1723. He wrote the famous *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, a book which has profoundly influenced the opinion of Englishmen upon the subject of the English law and constitution.

1. 29. to prove the pedigree, lit. to trace the line of descent, i.e. to show them to be inherited. Cf. "In itself the Great Charter was no novelty, nor did it claim to establish any new constitutional principles. The Charter of Henry I. formed the basis of the whole, and the additions to it are for the most part formal recognitions of the judicial and administrative changes introduced by Henry II. But the vague expressions of the older charters were now exchanged for precise and elaborate provisions. The bonds of unwritten custom which the older grants did little more than recognize had proved too weak to hold the Angevins; and

the baronage now threw them aside for the restraints of written law. It is in this way that the Great Charter marks the transition from the age of traditional rights, preserved in the nation's memory and officially declared by the Primate, to the age of written legislation, of parliaments, and statutes, which was soon to come." Green, *Short History of the English People*, pp. 123-4.

1. 33. **re-affirmance**, we use the form *re-affirmation*.

1. 34. **standing law**, the common law. See p. 22, l. 32. In the matter of fact, in what they assert to be a fact, viz. that our liberties are inherited.

P. 35, l. 3. **prepossession**, a bias in favour of. When the mind is *already occupied* by one opinion, no other can find room in it.

1. 6. **stationary**, unchanging.

1. 9. **the Petition of Right**, cf. p. 25, l. 14.

1. 11. **franchises**, privileges.

1. 14. **Selden**, John (1584-1654), was the son of a man of humble position in Worthing, a town in Sussex. He soon obtained a lucrative practice as a barrister. Though not a member of Parliament, he was imprisoned for the part which he took in instigating, if not in drafting, the protestation on the rights and privileges of the House, which was affirmed by the Commons in 1621. He was elected to Parliament in 1623. In the second Parliament of Charles (1626) he was prominent in the impeachment of the Duke of Buckingham. He subsequently helped to draw up and carry the Petition of Right. In 1629 he was one of the members imprisoned in the Tower for resisting the levy of tonnage and poundage. He sat in the Long Parliament as member for the University of Oxford. He was a member of the committee appointed to draw up a remonstrance on the state of the nation. He was also engaged in the arrangements for the impeachment of Strafford, but he was not one of the managers at the trial, and he voted against the Bill for his attainder. He was also on the Committee which framed the impeachment against Laud. In 1643 he was made Keeper of the Rolls and Records in the Tower. In 1645 he became one of the Parliamentary Commissioners of the Admiralty. In 1646 he subscribed the Solemn League and Covenant, and in the following year Parliament voted him £5,000 for his sufferings under the monarchy. From early manhood, down to the year preceding his death, he was engaged in writing books on English law and history, as well as upon Semitic laws and customs.

1. 15. **at least**, Burke implies that they were better acquainted.

1. 17. **pulpits**, see note on p. 12, l. 24.

1. 18. **tribune**, the platform from which the members of the French National Assembly spoke. **the Abbé Sieyès**, "A pamphlet written by the Abbé Sieyès, which gave clear articulation to the thought in men's minds, acquired for its author European celebrity. What, he asked, is the Third Estate?—Everything. What hitherto has it been in the State?—Nothing. He then proceeded to argue that the Third Estate, in other words the people of France with the exception of the nobles, formed a complete nation by themselves; that by them all useful work was done; and that the nobility were merely an excrescence, preventing the growth and development of national life. The Third Estate is, he said, a nation fettered and oppressed. What would it be without the nobility?—A free and flourishing nation." Mrs. Gardiner, *French Revolution*, p. 30. It was upon the motion of Sieyès that the Commons constituted themselves the National Assembly; and it was he who proposed a declaration by the Assembly of the Rights of Men.

1. 19. **practical wisdom**, skill in selecting the most effectual means of securing the immediate object in view. Ship-money might have been objected to on the general principle that it is unjust to deprive a man of his property without his consent. It was objected to on the ground that according to English law taxation and representation go together. The ground of objection chosen was the strongest. How far the English king is bound by general principles might be difficult to prove. But there can be no doubt that he exists to administer the English law.

1. 22. **vague**, hard to define. **speculative**, abstract. There can be no doubt as to what the law is, but there may be much doubt as to what natural rights are. If politics is turned into a struggle for indefinite rights, it will be a struggle of each to prove that he has a right to more than others. Cf. p. 47, l. 8.

1. 33. **making such an establishment that**, settling the constitution in such a way that.

1. 35. **auspicate**, solemnly begin. The Romans undertook no business of any importance without first consulting the auspices, to see whether the gods were favourable or no. The word *auspice* means literally *an observation of birds* for the purpose of augury.

P. 36, l. 10. **an entailed inheritance**, a property limited to certain heirs, so that the actual possessor at any time has only a life-interest in it. • Burke is fond of the metaphor, because it serves to emphasize his opinion that we hold our political privileges in trust for our descendants.

1. 21. **nature**, used, as it often is, in opposition to *art*, to describe what is or would be apart from human interference.

A common instinct makes the child love and cherish all that he has received from his parents. Englishmen therefore obey a natural and instinctive sentiment in cherishing their liberties as an inheritance; and, in so doing, they guarantee them more effectually than they would do by any contrivances which reason or reflection could suggest. Cf. p. 37, l. 24. Men guard jealously what they love.

l. 23. *a selfish temper, etc.*, Cf. p. 27, l. 30. *confined views*, because innovators do not look beyond themselves. They wish simply to gain an advantage to themselves, and do not care to consider what the effect will be to future generations. The word *innovation* in English generally implies that the change contemplated is a change for the worse.

l. 24. *People will not, etc.*, Those who are not conscious of what they owe to their ancestors, will not acknowledge that they owe anything to their descendants. Forgetting that they did not make the system under which they live, they will think themselves at liberty to deal with it as they please.

l. 31. *are locked, etc.*, are secured to the state as an inalienable possession. *A settlement* is a legal mode of conferring property absolutely on an individual or individuals.

l. 32. *in a kind of mortmain*, so that no one has any claim upon them. Property upon which the feudal lord had no claim was said to be held in mortmain. The word *mortmain* means *the dead hand*. Property held in mortmain was inalienable. The owner's hold upon it was like the clasp of a dead hand which cannot let go what it holds.

l. 33. *working after the pattern of nature*, cf. p. 37, l. 11, "by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state." The adoption of the hereditary principle is an application of natural law to politics. The continuity of the state cannot, any more than that of the family or of the human race generally, lie in the identity of the individuals who compose it. It consists in each case in the identity of what the successive generations of men possess.

l. 36. *The institutions of policy*, the political system which man himself creates, as distinguished from life and property which he inherits.

P. 37, l. 7. *the great mysterious incorporation, etc.*, Cf. p. 108. "To Burke there actually was an element of mystery in the cohesion of men in societies, in political obedience, in the sanctity of contract; in all that fabric of law, liberties, and obligations, whether written or unwritten, which is the sheltering bulwark between civilization and barbarism. When reason and history had contributed all that they could to the explanation, it seemed to him as if the vital force, the secret of organiza-



tion, the binding framework must still come from the impenetrable regions beyond reasoning and beyond history. . . . One of the reasons why Burke dreaded to see a finger laid upon a single stone of a single political edifice, was his consciousness that he saw no answer to the perpetual enigma how any of these edifices had ever been built, and how the passion, violence, and waywardness of the natural man had ever been persuaded to bow their necks to the strong yoke of a common social discipline."—Morley. We need not then wonder at Burke's anxiety to strengthen men's consciousness of the value of social order by every possible appeal, not only to reason, but also to imagination and sentiment. Aristotle was equally anxious to prove against those who would rest the state upon convention or compact, that it has its origin in the constitution of human nature. The state, according to him, "began in the blind impulses which first formed the household and broadened then into wider aims which nothing but the state could satisfy." It glided imperceptibly into existence, as men became successively aware of the various needs bound up with their nature. Men could not choose but form it, or some imperfect substitute for it. It is as much a necessity of human existence as food or fire. Its authority rests on the same basis as the authority of the Father, not on consent, but on the constitution of human nature. . . . The love of society and the perception of right and wrong implanted by nature in man, the impulse of self-perpetuation, the need of protection and sustenance, the higher needs that gradually assert themselves: these are the things to which the state owes its existence."—Newman's *Politics of Aristotle*, vol. i. pp. 27 and 33. "Man is by nature a social creature," is the often-quoted saying of Aristotle. It means that the existence of society is due to the development of natural instincts in man. We shall meet with other instances of the influence of Aristotle upon Burke.

l. 9. **unchangeable constancy**, *i.e.* obeying a uniform law.

l. 13. **obsolete**, literally, old, or worn out: so, out of date, out of fashion. The older elements in the constitution have been adapted to the needs and circumstances of modern times: the newer elements are modifications or extensions of the older.

l. 15. **the superstition**, etc., an unreasoning love of what is old simply because it is old.

l. 16. **philosophic analogy**, a wise imitation of the action of nature in similar circumstances.

l. 17. **polity**, see note on p. 9, l. 31.

l. 20. **fundamental laws**, cf. p. 17, l. 35. The spirit of the constitution has been preserved through all formal changes.

l. 22. **mutually reflected**, etc., each is loved for the same reason, namely, as connecting us with our forefathers. The love of each,

therefore, blends with, strengthens, and is strengthened by our love for the rest.

l. 26. to fortify, etc., see note on p. 36, l. 21. It is often argued in this country that municipal self-government will succeed because it is in accord with the traditions and habits of Indian village life. On the other hand, it is often seen to be difficult to get the people actively to support or really to sympathize with objects and means which, however reasonable they may be, are yet foreign.

l. 30. canonized, respected. To canonize, in the language of the Roman church, means to raise a person, who was eminent during his lifetime for holiness, to the rank of a saint.

l. 31. in itself, see note on p. 7, l. 35.

l. 36. noble, aristocratic. It is opposed to the insolence of an upstart.

P. 38, l. 1. It has a pedigree, Burke is drawing a parallel between a state and a family. Each can show an unbroken existence, and can point to eminent men among its members in the past. Each has distinctions of which it is proud. As the pictures of ancestors are hung in the family mansion, so history portrays the character of national heroes. The state, like the family, records upon the tomb the virtues of the dead. As the family preserves the legal documents proving its right to its possessions, so the state preserves the charters of its liberties.

l. 2. bearings, etc., literally, coats of arms. "As to armorial bearings, there is no doubt that emblems somewhat similar have been immemorially used both in war and peace. The shields of ancient warriors, and devices upon coins or seals, bear no distinct resemblance to modern blazonry. But the general introduction of such bearings, as hereditary distinctions, has been sometimes attributed to tournaments, wherein the champions were distinguished by fanciful devices; sometimes to the crusades, where a multitude of all nations and languages stood in need of some visible token to denote the banners of their respective chiefs. In fact, the peculiar symbols of heraldry point to both these sources, and have been borrowed in part from each. Hereditary arms were perhaps scarcely used by private families before the beginning of the thirteenth century. From that time, however, they became very general, and have contributed to elucidate that branch of history which regards the descent of illustrious families." Hallam, *Middle Ages*, ch. ii. pt. ii. The word *insigne* (ensign) was used in Latin for a standard or flag, and also for a badge of honour. The plural form *insignia* (ensigns) was still more common in this sense. Bacon in his 14th Essay says that in democracies "men's eyes are upon the business, and not upon

the persons; or if upon the persons, it is for the business' sake, as fittest, and not for *flags* and pedigree."

l. 4. *titles*, see note on p. 21, l. 4.

l. 7. *your sophisters*, Notice the use of *your* to express his contempt for the sophisters. It is equivalent to "any number of sophisters that you can produce." For *sophisters*, see note on p. 28, l. 20. For the comparison cf. Bacon, *Adv.* 2. 22. 15, "It is elegantly said by Menander .. *Love is a better instructor than a left-handed sophist*, that love teacheth a man to carry himself better than the sophist or preceptor, which he calleth left-handed, because, with all his rules and preceptions, he cannot form a man so dexterously, nor with that facility to prize and govern himself, as love can do."

l. 9. *rational and manly*, see note on p. 7, l. 27.

l. 10. *who have chosen*, etc., who trust for the preservation of our liberties to instinct rather than theory, to feeling rather than to ingenuity. See note on p. 36, l. 21.

l. 12. *magazines*, literally, storehouses.

Pp. 38-44. *There was no need for France to make a new constitution. Liberty and law are the fruits of deliberation between all orders of the state adequately represented. The States General in France provided for such representation; while the Monarchy was a security against the undue preponderance of any one class. An excess of loyalty had perhaps led the French in the course of generations to surrender many of their constitutional rights. But it would have been more becoming to reclaim them as hereditary rights, or to look for them, if they had been forgotten in France, in the institutions and policy of other nations, than to act with the brutality and ignorance of slaves who had never had any rights. As it is, failure and discontent have, as they always must, resulted from a contempt for experience. The only equality now existing in France is equality in wickedness. The extravagance and insolence of the people will justify the precautions and the terrorism of tyrants. The misery of France is of its own choosing. From an Assembly constituted like the National Assembly it would be absurd to expect political wisdom.*

Burke implies that the nobility, clergy, and commons were equally represented in the States General, that the representatives met and deliberated on an equal footing, and that it was therefore impossible that any law which they passed or any tax which they imposed could be oppressive, because no order would be either asked or forced to make concessions to the rest which the rest would not equally make to it. As a matter of fact, however,

the nobles and the clergy were privileged orders, who were practically exempt from taxation. It was the custom for the three orders to sit and vote separately, so that the two privileged orders, when their privileges were either attacked or threatened, could combine and oppose the third order. The evils of France were in large measure due to the persistent refusal of the privileged orders to consent to an equal distribution of taxes. Lastly, the reigning sovereign was not strong enough to put an end to the existing grievances though he personally deplored them.

The States General had not met since 1614. They had no legislative power, and, up to the time of the Revolution at any rate, the government had practically settled questions of taxation at its pleasure. The states did little more than represent grievances and suggest remedies which they had no power to enforce. The privileged orders were, naturally, not anxious to give importance to the states. Consequently, their constitution, powers, and procedure had never been really defined.

l. 14. of, we should say *by*.

l. 15. *correspondent*, proportionate. The meaning is explained on p. 37, l. 32 *seqq.* Burke means to say that the king in France had concentrated authority in his own hands by breaking up the power of the nobles, just as the weakening of the barons by the Wars of the Roses had increased the power of the sovereign in England. The history of England from Henry VII. onwards is a history of strong and powerful monarchs. When James II. attempted to go too far, the people simply reasserted their old rights and restored the monarchy to its old position. The French ought to have done the same. As a matter of fact, however, as is sufficiently explained in the Introduction, the people in France had no recognized rights, nor had they any means of enforcing attention to their demands. Burke's advice to the French to imitate England is ridiculous. If the relations between classes in England had been as embittered as they were in France, political co-operation would have been as impossible in the one country as in the other.

l. 17. *whilst you were out of possession*, whilst government exercised the powers and invaded the privileges of the people.

l. 18. *suffered waste*, etc., fell into disrepair. The constitution is compared to an untenanted and neglected building. You possessed, etc. Burke insists that there was no necessity to build afresh. Some of the institutions of a free government, such as the States General, actually existed. The materials for the rest were there. The French, therefore, might have "improved without being wholly new," p. 37, l. 12.

l. 25. *descriptions*, classes.

l. 26. *you had*, etc., The order of the physical universe is the

resultant of opposing forces. For instance, the path of the planets is determined by the action and counteraction of centrifugal and centripetal forces. So, in society, order does not result from every one having his own way, but from the concessions which each is obliged to make to each.

1. 32. so great a blemish, This is an unfair statement. The French would of course have admitted that society would fall to pieces if any class insisted on having its own way in anything. What they objected to was the existence of privileges which gave to certain classes an unfair advantage in the struggle.

1. 34. they render deliberation, etc., because we have to think what support or resistance we have to expect from others who are as anxious to forward their own interests as we are to forward ours.

P. 39, l. 1. naturally, we get into the habit of not expecting the impossible, because experience teaches us how far it is reasonable to expect to have our own way. temperaments, restraints.

1. 2. crude, literally, undigested. The necessity of debate is a security against premature and ill-advised changes. unqualified, absolute; unmodified. A reformer, in a constitutionally governed country, seldom, if ever, carries through his measure in its original shape. It becomes modified, in the course of debate, to suit the views and wishes of those without whose support it cannot be carried at all.

1. 3. exertions, the word is used simply in the sense of *exercise* or *use*, and not in the ordinary sense of *effort*. An 'exertion of power' means simply 'a putting forth of power.'

1. 6. had as many securities, No two members of a deliberative body will agree in everything. It is almost an impossibility therefore that all should combine to oppress anybody.

1. 9. warping, the metaphor is taken from a piece of wood which becomes twisted out of shape. The impartiality of the sovereign is a security against the tyranny of a class.

1. 12. you chose, notice how Burke insists that the French Revolution was a deliberate crime. Cf. p. 43, l. 36, "This unforced choice, this fond election of evil."

1. 15. capital is that portion of a nation's wealth which, instead of being spent, is invested. So it comes to signify an accumulated stock of anything. The problem which the French set themselves was not to improve what they had already, but to create something which did not exist.

1. 16. without much lustre, viz. because they did not assert their legitimate rights as against the usurpation of the executive.

1. 18. Under a pious predilection, influenced by a preference based on natural affection. The Latin word *pious* signifies *duty*.

*ful*, and is properly applied to the sentiment which binds a man to his relations. Because you loved them, you would have thought them wiser and better than the ordinary men of to-day; and you would yourselves have been improved by the effort to be as good and as wise as you thought them to be.

l. 23. to respect yourselves, viz. on the ground of your descent from them. Cf. p. 37, l. 29 *seqq.*

l. 26. at the expense, at the cost or sacrifice of. That freedom was new to you is not creditable to you, though the fact will account for your misuse of freedom.

l. 27. your apologists here, your defenders in England.

l. 29. Maroon, a term applied in the French West Indies to describe a runaway slave. Skeat says it is a clipped form of the Spanish *cimaroon*, wild, unruly, lit. living in the mountain-tops.

l. 34. generous, possessed of the qualities which we associate with free or noble birth. gallant, chivalrous.

l. 35. high and romantic, exaggerated and fanciful. The word *romantic* derives its sense of adventurous and sentimental from the general tone of the stories composed in the dialects derived from the *Roman* language. The French might have urged that an exaggerated sense of what they owed to the sovereign and to the country which he represented had led them into an unwise surrender of authority to him. See note on p. 85, l. 1.

P. 40, l. 3. public spirit, patriotism.

l. 6. amiable, used in its proper sense of *loveable*. Their action was unwise—their motive was good.

l. 13. common law, see note on p. 22, l. 32. Cf. "The whole of the polity and economy of every country in Europe has been derived from the same sources. It was drawn from the old Germanic or Gothic customary; from the feudal institutions which must be considered as an emanation from that customary; and the whole has been improved and digested into system and discipline by the Roman law."—*First Letter on a Regicide Peace*. meliorated, cf. p. 5, l. 2. Burke now proceeds to draw a picture of France as, in his opinion, it might have been, and of England as he conceived it to be. Later on in the book he undertakes to show at length that France had none of the things which he here mentions.

l. 20. auxiliary to law, because men are more likely to give effectual support to a law to which they have consented than to one which is imposed upon them simply by authority. unoppressive, because taxation is not burdensome to a wealthy nation.

l. 24. mitigated, kept under proper control.

l. 25. *overlay*, to stifle. Instead of being jealous of any activity and independence on the part of the people, the nobility ought to encourage and direct their inclination and efforts to do good.

l. 26. recruit, I have explained in the introduction that the nobles in France were a caste resting on birth.

l. 30. the true moral equality, See note on p. 3, l. 16. It is possible for all men to do their duty equally in their own sphere of life. But no other equality than equality in virtue is possible. Nature has created inequalities amongst men which it is impossible to remove; and society implies division of labour and consequent inequalities of position and authority. The most that the state can do is to throw its prizes open to all by competition, and to enable as many as possible to start with equal advantages and chances in the struggle of life.

P. 41, l. 1. not more happy, cf. p. 114.

l. 4. you have shewn, etc., cf. p. 187, l. 16.

l. 6. extravagant, wild, literally, *straying from* facts or the teachings of experience. The word extravagant means properly *not kept within bounds*, though it is now used most frequently in the special sense of *passing the bounds of economy*. presumptuous, cf. p. 106, l. 25. "Personal self-sufficiency and arrogance," etc.

l. 9. to despise themselves, cf. p. 39, l. 22. "Respecting your forefathers," etc.

l. 11. lights, guides or teachers.

l. 14. France has not, etc., She has not done wrong for the sake of gain, but has courted loss for the pleasure of wrongdoing. Prostitute is a strong word generally applied to a woman who sells her honour for money.

l. 21. masculine, robust. Strength to resist temptation is, like any other sort of strength, naturally associated with men rather than with women. In fact we call women 'the weaker sex.' By calling morality a security for freedom he means that a sense of duty restrains the strong from opposing the weak. let loose, relaxed.

l. 22. ferocious, brutal.

l. 23. insolent, because the open avowal of it outraged the feelings of those to whom religion was sacred. Burke is thinking of the sufferings of the clergy, on which he afterwards dwells at length.

l. 26. secluded, from which the majority had hitherto been shut out.

l. 28. This is one, etc. See note on p. 40, l. 30. They are resolved, says Burke, that all shall be equally wicked; even if they cannot be equal in any other respect. Speaking generally, the rich and the powerful have greater temptations and ampler means of gratifying their passions, than the poor and humble.

l. 29. disgraced, used in its literal sense of 'thrown into disfavour.'

l. 30. cabinets, councils. The word cabinet signifies properly the chamber in which the council meets.

l. 31. its most potent topics, the strongest arguments in its favour. sanctified, justified.

l. 34. moral politicians, men who profess to base policy not on experience, or on considerations of expediency, but on principles of natural justice. Cf. p. 92, l. 11. "I tremble for the cause of liberty, from such an example to kings." After the treatment which the French king has received from the people whom he trusted and loved, no king can be expected to trust or to indulge his subjects.

P. 42, l. 4. irreparable, for which nothing can make up.

l. 6. your parliament, etc. The word parliament in France meant a law-court. "The parliaments, originally nine, afterwards fifteen, in number, formed the supreme legal tribunals; of these, the Parliament of Paris held the highest rank, from the great extent of its jurisdiction, and the authority of its magistrates; but they were all filled with the consciousness of their real independence and sovereign power, and could agree, neither among themselves, nor with the inferior courts, nor even with the royal council, as to the limits of their functions. They interfered very largely both with the legislation and general administration of the country. They maintained that no royal edict had any legal force until it had been entered on the register of the parliament, and that they had the right to protest against such registration, both on legal grounds and in the interest of the public. They issued orders and directions to the police, and pronounced judgment on any illegal measures of government officials. In a state of open rivalry with the church, they prided themselves on protecting the state and the private citizen against the encroachments of the hierarchy. Their tendency to oppose the church not unfrequently gained them the favour of the crown; but on other occasions their stubborn wilfulness proved highly embarrassing to the government. The king, indeed, generally compelled them to register the laws that they had rejected, forbid them to prosecute the accused magistrates, and banished disobedient members. In most cases the parliaments were thus forced to yield; but they insisted all the more strongly on their rights in principle, and adhered to them on every fresh



occasion-with immovable tenacity. The relation of the members of these courts to the monarch himself may be easily conjectured from the fact, that their offices, if not attached to some fiefal domain, were sold as hereditary possessions; so that the crown had nothing at all to do with filling them when vacant. If the government was of opinion that any tribunal administered justice insufficiently, it had no other legal remedy than to set aside the verdict on the ground of a formal error, or to put a new interpretation on the law, or (in accordance with a hazardous practice of the early middle ages) to summon the parties before their own tribunals, and try the cause *de novo*. They never thought of removing any of the judges by dismissal, translation, or promotion." *Von Sybil*, Bk. 1, Ch. 1. It was the Parliament of Paris which demanded the convocation of the States General. The parliaments were afterwards abolished. See below, pp. 231 *seqq.*

l. 12. to lull authority asleep, to put governments off their guard.

l. 14. which distinguish, etc., it is a mark of folly in governments, as in individuals, to carry kindness and trustfulness so far as to put themselves at the mercy of their enemies.

l. 16. abstract, not modified to suit the circumstances of the country to which it is to be applied. For instance, the Arms Act in this country (India) may in many cases involve hardship, or, at least, may be resented as showing a want of confidence in the people. On the other hand, no sensible man would propose to allow every rogue in India to carry arms.

l. 18. the medicine, etc., for the metaphor cf. p. 33, l. 26, and p. 69, l. 21. De Tocqueville remarks that the most dangerous period in the history of a despotism is that at which it begins to reform. People will submit to evils which they regard as inevitable: but when they are once familiarized with the idea of a mitigation of burdens, they entertain the idea of a complete enfranchisement. The removal of some abuses only opens men's eyes to the grievousness of those which remain behind. As a matter of fact, however, the people were only irritated by the indecision and half-heartedness of the king. He used fair words, but in reality he was a mere tool in the hands of the court party.

l. 26. This, viz., that kindness should provoke resistance. ~ For the meaning of *unnatural* see note on p. 10, l. 26. in order, natural: what might have been expected from such a beginning.

l. 27. laws overturned, etc., Burke adduces his proofs of these assertions later on in the book.

l. 30. a state not relieved, without any improvement in the national finances.

l. 31. made the constitution, etc., a strong expression. There is a permanent establishment of disorder. We are reminded of Milton's description of the place

"Where eldest Night  
And Chaos, ancestors of Nature, hold  
Eternal anarchy, amidst the noise  
Of endless wars, and by confusion stand."

*Par. Lost*, ii. 894.

l. 32. human and divine, because, as he explains later on, holders of office in the state and priests had both been robbed. the idol of public credit, an *idol* signifies any object which receives a worship that it does not deserve. *Credit* means the repayment of the national debt. It is quite right that people should pay their debts: but they are not justified in robbing others in order to do it. Cf. p. 120, l. 1.

l. 35. discredited, which men will not accept as the equivalent of money. paper securities, The government, being in want of money, confiscated the landed estates of the church. If they had offered such a large amount of land for sale at once, the price realized would have been small. They proposed therefore to dispose of it gradually, as opportunities for favourable sale presented themselves. Meanwhile they issued notes on the security of the land. They were called *assignats*, because each note was practically an *assignment* to the holder of land equivalent in value to the nominal value of the note. Whenever, therefore, a piece of land was sold, *assignats* to the amount of the price realized by the sale should have been called in and destroyed. As a matter of fact, however, the government issued *assignats* beyond the value of the land. They then became mere promissory notes without any security: and people naturally refused to accept them at their nominal value. See Mill, *Political Economy*, Bk. iii. ch. xiii. § 3. Burke constantly recurs to the subject. impoverished fraud, The constant issue of *assignats* was fraudulent, because they were issued in excess of what was nominally put forward as security for the redemption of them. The fraud was due to the financial embarrassment of the government.

l. 36. beggared rapine, robbers reduced to indigence. Burke means that the property, on the security of which the *assignats* were issued, was stolen from priests and others.

P. 43, l. 1. species, kinds of money, viz. gold and silver. that represent, etc., which men have agreed to accept as equivalents for property. The word *conventional* as opposed to *natural* signifies what is a matter of arrangement or contract. Other things than gold and silver may be and are used for money. But silver and gold are so much more convenient for the purpose than anything else, that all civilized nations have adopted them.

l. 3. **disappeared**, etc. Gold and silver were no longer to be seen in France. Men would not give them in exchange for a worthless paper currency.

l. 4. **whose creatures**, etc., when there is nothing to be bought and sold, there is no need of money. Money, therefore, ~~as~~ the creature of, i.e. owes its existence to, property. Money represents property because money can be obtained only in exchange for something of value, and because the possessor of money can obtain what he wishes in exchange for it. The 'principle of property' is the right of every man to what is his own. This principle was 'systematically subverted' in France, because, whenever the government was in need, it took violent possession of the property of individuals and of institutions. Cf. p. 116, l. 9 *seqq.*

l. 19. **waste**, the word signifies properly unnecessary expenditure, so "a wild waste of public evils" means a reckless infliction of unnecessary suffering upon the state. Elsewhere Burke says, "If ever we ought to be economists even to parsimony, it is in the voluntary production of evil." the last stake, etc., a sacrifice which no country should be called upon to make except as a last resource. The word stake means something risked on the chance or in the expectation of gain.

l. 23. **their pioneers**, the philosophers. The current political teaching had prepared the French to accept the principles and acquiesce in the actions of the Revolutionists.

l. 27. **their shoe buckles**, Patriotic donations of silver plate were made in response to a call by the government for voluntary contributions of money. See below, p. 259.

l. 31. **their cruelty**, etc. They cannot excuse themselves on the ground that those whom they ill-treated would have ill-treated them if they had not been prevented.

l. 36. **unforced choice**, etc., see note on p. 39, l. 12.

P. 44, l. 3. **formal constitution**, the manner in which it is constituted, as distinguished from the men who compose it. The distribution of men matters nothing, if the men themselves are bad. In saying that the formal arrangement is exceptionable, Burke alludes to the double representation of the third order.

l. 9. **in that light**, considered from that point of view.

l. 13. **instead of blameable**, etc. When a man known to be wise and good does what appears to be immoral, we say that it is not his judgment but our own that is at fault.

l. 14. **artificial**, contrived by human ingenuity. It is opposed to what is natural.

l. 20. **Upon whom they lay**, whom they appoint as their representatives. Election to parliament will not turn a bad man into

a good one. Burke is alluding to a statement in the Bible to the effect that early converts to Christianity received special spiritual gifts when the apostles' hands were laid upon them. *Ordination* is the technical term for the ceremony by which a man is admitted to the priesthood: and the imposition of the bishop's hands on the head of the candidate is still part of the ceremony.

l. 21. *the engagement of nature*, literally, nature has not undertaken or promised. Experience has shown that a man's nature cannot suddenly be changed by a mere accident. In a similar sense he talks of "an usurpation on the prerogatives of nature," p. 54, l. 6. Cf. Bacon's 38th *Essay*.

l. 22. *revelation*, Scripture. They have no authority of any kind, human or divine, for expecting it.

Pp. 44-54. *The Third Estate was for the most part represented by men without education, without position, and without experience, and likely therefore to be made the instruments of the few clever rogues amongst them. Their number made them paramount in the state. The majority were drawn from the lowest ranks of the legal profession. They would regard power simply as a means of stimulating the disputes by which they gain their livelihood. The rustics, the petty traders, the doctors, and the stock-jobbers, who formed the rest of the chamber, were no match for these clever lawyers. Legislators should be men of large views and wide experience, especially when they are left free to make a constitution for a great country. The representatives of the clergy, too, were for the most part chosen from the lowest, the most ignorant, and the poorest classes of the profession. These men and the representatives of the Third Estate naturally became the tools of turbulent and discontented nobles. Thus everything in France was sacrificed to the ambition and the passions of the worst men in the country. Since social life implies degress of rank, an attack upon privileges, if successful, can only result in substituting for those who are deprived of them men who are by nature not fitted to enjoy them.*

l. 24. *descriptions*, cf. p. 38, l. 25.

l. 28. *of any practical experience*, As France had long been governed by the officials of a centralized government, the people were of course shut off from all opportunities of acquiring any political experience.

l. 29. *men of theory*, men who put forward abstract principles without regard to the limitations required by circumstances of time and place. Cf. p. 7, l. 32.

P. 45, l. 1. *viciously or feebly*, if the majority be immoral, or wanting in ability. It corresponds to *taste and disposition*, and

*talent*, in the first line of the page. So on p. 49, l. 36, Burke says what ought to be *the heads, the hearts, the dispositions* of legislators! i.e. what ability they ought to have, what consideration for the feelings of those for whom they legislate, what a hatred of wrong doing! Later on in the book he criticizes the confiscation of church property as being *stupid, cruel, and immoral*.

1. 7. *they, the men of talents.*

1. 8. *meretricious*, alluring by false show, as a harlot (Lat. *meretrix*) does.

1. 10. *the dupe*, etc., without knowing it, they are made to further their plans. Cf. "In civil actions he is the greater and deeper politike, that can make other men the instruments of his will and ends, and yet never acquaint them with his purpose, so as they shall do it, and yet not know what they do, than he that imparteth his meaning to them he employeth." Bacon, *Adv.* ii. vii. 7.

1. 16. *to respect*, etc. They should be deterred from proposing immoral or foolish measures by the fear either of moral condemnation or of actual punishment.

1. 18. *blindly, unintelligently.*

1. 20. *of natural weight*, they must be men to whom people ordinarily look up in virtue of their position and character, as opposed to men to whom circumstances have given an accidental authority. On p. 54 he says that the mere accident of election cannot give authority to a hair-dresser or a tallow-chandler.

1. 23. *condition in life*, etc., they should be presumably respectable, they should have an interest in good government, and they should be men of ability. Otherwise, as he explains later on, they will endeavour to raise and enrich themselves at the expense of others, and they will ruin the state by their stupidity.

1. 24. *habits*, etc., Legislation is so far-reaching in its consequences, and the interests affected by it are so many and diverse, that the legislator requires to look beyond the immediate consequences of his acts and to have an impartial regard for all who are to be affected by them.

1. 29. *six hundred persons*, Formerly the orders were equally represented, and they sat and voted separately. The two privileged orders of nobles and clergy could therefore by combining outvote the third order. At the time to which Burke alludes the people insisted that they should have as many representatives as the other two orders put together, and that the orders should sit and vote together. Thus a single deserter from either of the other two orders would give a majority to the third order. The privileged orders refused to consent to this arrangement; con-

sequently the representatives of the third order constituted themselves the *National Assembly*. This is what Burke means by saying that "the whole power of the state was soon resolved into that body," p. 46, l. 2.

l. 32. the expense, the members were paid a certain sum daily.

l. 34. the policy, the object aimed at: the design.

P. 46, l. 8. distinguished magistrates, representatives of this class sat in the order of the nobles.

l. 13. mechanical, men whose work demanded no originality or ingenuity: such as mere copying clerks.

l. 16. stewards, bailiffs: men left in charge by the owner. It is not true that men of this class formed a majority in the Assembly. Judges, barristers, and law officers of various kinds did, however, form more than half of the Assembly. It is not surprising that an oppressed and ignorant peasantry should choose lawyers as their representatives. They knew what their grievances were, they could make them known, and could point out how far, and in what cases, they involved violations of the law, and how and where redress could be sought. A pleader is an important person, for the same reasons, in Indian society: and the people are always anxious that the independence of the law courts should be religiously respected. In France, especially, the services of lawyers were in constant request, because of the extreme complexity of French law. "The legal tribunals were a congeries of old remnants and new experiments, existing side by side, amidst continual collisions and disagreements. The feudal seigniors, or the civic authorities everywhere possessed an inferior, and sometimes a superior, jurisdiction over their fiefs. The superintendence over these feudal judges, and the decision of the more important causes, were entrusted to the royal *bailliages*, or tribunals of the royal domains: a certain number of which—under the name of *præsidential-courts*—served as courts of appeal. But in none of these courts was the extent of their powers either definitely or unchangeably fixed. They were continually crossed and disturbed by the privileges of birth, office, and rank; and though the legal procedure was the same throughout the whole empire, the law was weakened by a mass of local customs and police regulations."—*Von Sybil*, Bk. 1, ch. 1. To these clashing jurisdictions we must also add those of the church and the parliaments. Montesquieu, in his *Lettres Persanes*, No. ci., says—"Who can imagine that the most ancient and powerful kingdom of Europe has been governed for more than ten centuries by laws which were not made for it? If the French had been conquered, this would be easy to understand. But they are the conquerors. They have abandoned the old laws

made by their early kings in the general assemblies of the nation : and it is remarkable that the Roman laws, which they have adopted in their stead, were partly made and partly formulated by Emperors who were contemporary with their own legislators. And in order that the borrowing might be complete, and that all the good sense might come to them from outside, they have adopted all the constitutions of the Popes, and have made them a new part of their law. This is a fresh kind of servitude. It is true that in later times they have reduced to writing certain statutes of towns and districts : but they are nearly all taken from Roman law. This abundance of adopted or naturalised laws is so great that justice and judges alike sink under it. But these volumes of laws are nothing compared to the frightful array of interpreters, commentators, and compilers—a race as feeble by their want of intellectual fairness as they are formidable by their prodigious numbers. Nor is this all. These foreign laws have introduced formalities which are the disgrace of human reason. It would be difficult to decide whether formality does more harm when it enters into jurisprudence, or when it is established in medicine : whether it has done more destruction under the gown of a lawyer, than under the broad hat of a doctor : and whether it has ruined more people in the one than it has killed in the other.”

1. 22. the professors, the members of the profession.

1. 25. in that military kingdom, cf. p. 247, l. 13.

P. 47, l. 1. at stake, who had no reputation to lose. in character, in means *in the form of*: a man's good name is a valuable possession to him. Cf. :

“ Who steals my purse steals trash ; . . . .  
But he that filches from me my good name  
Robs me of that which not enriches him,  
And makes me poor indeed.”—*Othello*, iii, 3.

1. 7. unprepared, For which they were not prepared.

1. 10. would easily, etc., They will not again be contented with the scanty livelihood which they previously obtained by encouraging litigation amongst obscure villagers. Cf. p. 46, l. 18.

1. 11. *chicane* is a French word which signifies *wrangling*, *pettifoggery*.

1. 14. but too well, only too well. The word *too* used in this way shows that the fact alluded to is matter for regret. The state will suffer from their unprincipled selfishness.

1. 16. planted in the nature of things, for an explanation of this phrase see note on p. 10, l. 26. The men being what they were, their policy could not be other than it was.

l. 29. **Well !** but, Burke proceeds to answer an imaginary objector.

l. 32. **super-eminent**—awful, ironical.

l. 33. **glowns, boors.**

P. 48, l. 6. **proportion**, only sixteen. The French comedian Molière is fond of ridiculing the medical profession. Cf. below p. 264, and cf. the concluding words from Montesquieu quoted in the note on p. 46, l. 16. In the *Lettres Persanes*, No. cxxxv., Montesquieu says that "the books on anatomy contain much less the description of the parts of the body, than the barbarous names men have given them. They cure neither the patient of his disease, nor the doctor of his ignorance."

l. 12. **the sides of sick beds**, For Burke's opinion that politics is a business for experts, see note on p. 12, l. 10.

l. 15. **ideal paper wealth**? see note on p. 42, l. 35.

l. 23. **landed interest**, This was sufficiently represented by the nobles and clergy.

l. 25. **shutting its doors**, etc., excluding from membership.

l. 28. **politic**, political.

l. 34. **that profession**, the law. So Bacon says, "The place of justice is an hallowed place." Burke has said already that priests ought not to meddle with politics. He says the same thing again, p. 50, l. 32 *seqq.*

P. 49, l. 3. **give the lie to nature**, I cannot assert that they will act otherwise than in accordance with their character, cf. p. 47, l. 16. **in the composition**, as an element in the whole.

l. 5. **virtually**, practically though not literally. See on p. 29, l. 29. The majority of an assembly is not literally the whole of it : but to all intents and purposes it is the whole, since matters are decided by the vote of the majority. **Their very excellence**, in his speech on American Taxation, Burke, describing the character of Mr. Grenville, says, "He was bred in a profession. He was bred to the law, which is, in my opinion, one of the first and noblest of human sciences ; a science which does more to quicken and invigorate the understanding, than all the other kinds of learning put together ; but it is not apt, except in persons very happily born, to open and to liberalize the mind exactly in the same proportion. Passing from that study he did not go very largely into the world ; but plunged into business ; I mean into the business of office, and the limited and fixed methods and forms established there. Much knowledge is to be had undoubtedly in that line ; and there is no knowledge which is not valuable. But it may be truly said, that men too much conversant with office are rarely minds of remarkable enlarge-



ment. Their habits of office are apt to give them a turn to think the substance of business not to be much more important than the forms in which it is conducted. These forms are adapted to ordinary occasions; and therefore persons who are nurtured in office do admirably well as long as things go on in their common order; but when the high roads are broken up, and the waters out, when a new and troubled scene is opened, and the file affords no precedent, then it is that a greater knowledge of mankind, and a far more extensive comprehension of things, is requisite, than office ever gave, or than office can ever give. Mr. Grenville thought better of the wisdom and power of human legislation than in truth it deserves."

l. 20. counterpoized, etc. It is to be noticed that the power of the House of Lords in this respect is diminishing. When the lords set themselves in opposition to the clearly expressed wish of the people on a subject of importance, there is a cry for the reform, if not for the abolition, of the Upper House. What Burke calls 'the discretion of the crown' is really the discretion of the prime minister, upon whose advice the sovereign acts.

l. 26. the breakers of law, men who in illegal ways amassed fortunes in India, used, on returning to England, to bribe the electors, and so get themselves returned to parliament. They were often bribed to use their money and influence in favour of the crown and the government. Burke was opposed to parliamentary reform. The defects of parliament, he thought, were due to the corruptness of the members, not to the smallness of the constituencies. He considered the mass of voters to be so ignorant and so venal that no alteration of the franchise would remedy the disease. He wished to deprive the crown and the administration of the powers which they possessed, directly and indirectly, of getting their own nominees elected to parliament. He wished to abolish the many places which the crown and the government had in their gift, and which served as so many bribes for the purchase of votes in the house. He wished also that lists of the votes given in parliament should be published so that the electors might know how their representatives were fulfilling their trust.

l. 30. the destruction of the orders, see note on p. 45, l. 29.

l. 31. convention, the rules of debate prevailing in the English House of Commons are largely matter of *positive agreement*, being decided on by the votes of the members.

l. 34. conform to their designs, see p. 47, l. 17 *seqq.*

l. 36. What ought to be, etc., see note on p. 45, l. 1.

P. 50, l. 2. at one heat, the metaphor is taken from a smith hammering out heated iron on the anvil.

l. 4. the vestry, For ecclesiastical purposes, a parish is a district entrusted to a single clergyman. For purposes of civil government, a parish is a district for which one poor-rate is or can be levied. The vestry, so called from the robing room in the church (Lat. *vestis*, a robe), which was formerly the place of meeting, consists of the ratepayers, who meet to elect guardians of the poor, and other officers connected with the administration of poor relief and the guardianship of parish property.

l. 5. Fools rush in, etc., Pope, *Essay on Criticism*, v. 625. Ignorant men boldly undertake a task, from which wise men shrink because they know the difficulties of it.

l. 7. undefinable, there can be no limit to their powers but their own will. moral, see note on p. 19, l. 21. So unfitted were they by character and disposition for the work of government, that it was almost as impossible that they should govern well, as that one of the laws of the physical world should be suspended.

l. 17. curates, parish priests (Fr. *curés*). In ordinary English the word signifies a clergyman paid and employed by the parish priest to assist him. The parish priests in France belonged chiefly to the citizen and peasant class. They were very poorly paid. All the well-paid appointments in the church were reserved for members of noble families.

l. 30. those, viz. the lawyers.

l. 34. their flocks, their parishioners. The priest takes care of them as the shepherd does of his flock. A pastoral staff is the common symbol of a bishop's authority. In the Bible the term shepherd is applied to the Ruler of the World: and the early Christians were fond of representing Christ as The Good Shepherd.

P. 51, l. 2. momentum, (Lat. *movimentum*, movement), impelling force.

l. 8. individuals, see note on p. 9, l. 14. In a letter written to his political leader, Lord Rockingham, Burke explained that his pamphlet on *The Present Discontents* was directed against the Bedfords, the Grenvilles, and other knots who were combined for no public purpose, but only as a means of furthering with joint strength their private and individual advantage.

l. 12. their fellows, their equals in rank and position.

l. 15. despise their own order, they are not satisfied with a distinction which they share with so many.

l. 19. a platoon, a company of men. A man who does not love his own family and all those with whom he is by nature and position associated will never love those of his countrymen who

are strangers to him. Much less will he love men of other countries with whom he has nothing in common but the fact of being a man.

1. 24. in abuse, a man is not to push the interests of his own order or caste at the expense of those of other orders.

1. 29. the then Earl of Holland, He was rewarded by Charles I. for his services in the attempt to reassert the king's rights over forests which had come to be regarded as private property. Though he rendered great services to the king and queen, yet they had reason on their part to charge him with ingratitude. He was executed for his desertion of the Parliamentary party, of which he had become one of the leaders. Hallam, *Hist. of England*, Chs. viii. and x.

P. 52, l. 1. that, simply used as a connecting particle. We should repeat the *if*. Cf. p. 3, l. 16.

1. 2. would engross, wish to monopolize.

1. 3. revenge and envy, when they have apparently got all that man can wish for, they can still wish that no one else had as much. They become jealous of the sovereign's other favourites, and are angry with him for the favour which he shows them.

1. 5. distempered, disordered and diseased. See on p. 33, l. 26, and cf. p. 52, l. 34. In this sentence the stress is on the word *complication*. When a man is under the influence of a single passion, his aims are definite and intelligible enough. A miser, for example, will sacrifice everything to the attainment of money. But supposing that he is actuated not only by love of money but also by hostility to an individual, an occasion may arise in which he can only purchase revenge by the sacrifice of money. Then he will be perplexed what to do.

1. 9. all is enlarged, the bounds are removed. They have a vague idea that a break up of society would mean unlimited freedom to themselves. Bacon, *Adv. ii. xxiii. 45*, talks of men who would adopt 'that protestation of L. Catilina, to set on fire and trouble states, to the end to fish in troumy waters, and to unwrap their fortunes. *If my fortunes be set on fire I will extinguish it not with water but with destruction.*'

1. 27. fraudulent circulation, etc., see note on p. 42, l. 35.

1. 29. made, we should say *paid*. Cf. p. 218, l. 23.

1. 30. his kinsman, Waller. "He repaid the Protector for his favours (1654) by the famous panegyric, which has always been considered as the first of his poetical productions. His choice of encomiastic terms is very judicious, for he considers Cromwell in his exaltation, without inquiry how he attained it; there is consequently no mention of the rebel or the regicide. All the

former part of his hero's life is veiled with shades; and nothing is brought to view but the chief, the governor, the defender of England's honour and the enlarger of her dominions." Johnson, *Life of Waller*. At the Restoration Waller addressed a congratulation to Charles.

l. 36. **vulgar**, mean in comparison with the sun.

P. 53, l. 2. **natural**, proper. The word gets this sense from the idea that the order of nature is designed by God, and that, therefore, what is natural must be right. So on p. 55, l. 10, he says it is an act of *impiety* to exclude from power those whom nature has fitted to rule.

l. 4. **by outshining them**, not, as in France, by humiliating them. See p. 53, l. 27.

l. 5. **like a destroying angel**, the metaphor is borrowed from the Bible. John Bright, speaking in the House of Commons of the effects of the Crimean war, borrowed a similar metaphor. "The Angel of Death has been abroad throughout the land; you may almost hear the beating of his wings." If Cromwell brought suffering upon England, yet he made her strong and respected.

l. 8. **as a balance**, cf. "and if any man flatter himself that he will employ his fortune well, though he should obtain it ill, as was said concerning Augustus Cæsar, and after of Septimius Severus, *that either they should never have been born, or else they should never have died*, they did so much mischief in the pursuit and ascent of their greatness, and so much good when they were established; yet these compensations and satisfactions are good to be used, but never good to be purposed." Bacon, *Adv. ii. xxiii. 46*.

l. 11. In the wars between the Catholics and the Huguenots in France, which lasted from 1562-1598, the Guise family were prominent on the Catholic, the Condés and Colignis on the Huguenot side. Henry IV. and his minister Sully endeavoured to put an end to their struggles. Richelieu, the minister of Louis XIII., is said to have acted in the spirit of a civil war, because his policy was to destroy each powerful interest in the state successively by means of the others, so as to concentrate all power in the hands of the king.

l. 20. **slain the mind**, He means that France has been placed at the mercy of all the low passions which man shares with the brutes.

l. 23. **the organs**, the institutions.

l. 25. **a palsy**, a contracted form of the more common *paralysis*. When the institutions which make the state are destroyed, and when every stimulus to loyalty has been removed, the state is practically dead.

l. 28. *can entertain*, etc., he only knows that he is alive by feeling that he is insulted.

l. 32. *clowns*, cf. p. 47, l. 33.

l. 33. *fellows*, cf. p. 51, l. 12.

l. 34. *never equalize*, By removing the artificial distinctions which society has created, men cannot remove the natural inequalities between men. Some will still be cleverer, better, and stronger than others.

l. 35. *description*, cf. p. 38, l. 25.

P. 54, l. 1. *load*, make it top-heavy.

l. 4. *the republic*, Burke frequently insists that the new divisions of France which the Assembly substituted for the old provinces were so many independent republics. Cf. pp. 57-8, and p. 205.

l. 7. *the prerogatives of nature*, the *prerogative* means the powers which belong to nature properly and in her own right. Cf. p. 26, l. 35. Nature makes men what they are. Nature, therefore, decides who are to rule and who to obey.

Pp. 54-58. *Men to whom political power is entrusted should be men whose education and employment have fitted them for the exercise of it. The state, of course, should take advantage of all the ability which it can command, no matter in what rank of life it may be found. But a man who, by position, is presumably unfitted for power must prove his fitness for it before he is entrusted with it. Property is never safe against the attacks of clever adventurers unless owners of large properties are largely represented. Men who have property and position are interested in transmitting them to their descendants. The continuity of society largely depends on the interest which one generation takes in the next. Property and distinction, therefore, deserve consideration in the state, because they help to preserve it. Mere number, apart from wisdom, has no right to command. The attempt of the French to equalize those whom nature has made unequal has resulted only in license. The policy of decentralization adopted by the Assembly must result in a division of the country into independent states.*

l. 9. *The chancellor*, Barentin, the keeper of the great seal. At the opening of the states general, he spoke immediately after the king.

l. 10. *oratorical flourish*, rhetorical display. For *oratorical* (Lat. *oratorius*) we use the form *oratorical*.

l. 20. *In this*, etc., Their exclusion from power is quite

reasonable because, their pursuits being what they are, they cannot be fit for power. Aristotle, in his *Politics*, argues that trade and industry involve want of leisure for political activity, and for the exercise of the higher functions of man's nature. They involve dependence, and require bodily labour only. They are enervating, and engender vulgar greed. Those who practise them, he says, are capable of a certain sort of virtue, but the best thing for them is to be ruled by the best men in the society.

l. 22. *sophistical*, see note on p. 28, l. 20. Burke means that, as no two men are exactly alike, no general proposition can be absolutely true of a large number of men. His argument, therefore, is not to be overthrown by citing an instance of a hairdresser who has made good use of power. To reply to it in this way would show a disingenuous resolve to misunderstand the argument, or a willingness to evade it by a mere quibble.

P. 55, l. 4. *blood*, men of noble birth.

l. 6. *presumptive*, On p. 47, l. 1, Burke pointed out that virtue and wisdom were 'not to be expected' from those who composed the majority of the Assembly.

l. 8. *the passport of Heaven*, God has marked them out for authority. The word *passport* means lit. permission to pass through a gate. In ordinary use the word signifies a document, signed by a competent authority, enabling a person to travel from place to place. Generally it signifies a *right of entry*.

l. 10. *impiously*, see note on p. 53, l. 2.

l. 11. *civil*, etc., in the state, in the army, or in the church.

l. 15. *contracted view*, cf. p. 45, l. 24.

l. 17. *Every thing ought*, etc. No position should be reserved for the members of any class. But it does not follow from this that any member of any class has a right to any position.

l. 19. *sortition*, appointment by lot.

l. 20. *conversant in*, dealing with.

l. 27. *The temple*, etc., So Pope says of his *Temple of Fame*,

"High on a rock of ice the structure lay,  
Steep its ascent, and slippery was the way."

Mr. Morley has pointed out that "Burke always advocated the government of the many by a virtuous and public-spirited few. He never rose to the conception of a government of a whole people by themselves. He looked upon an aristocracy with popular sympathies as the true remedy for the revolutionary policy so dangerously visible in his days, as well as the best embodiment of true and permanent principles of government.

It was because it was a highly aristocratic body that he admired the English House of Commons. It was designed, he says, 'as a control for the people.' Burke never abandoned this tutelary view of the relations between the people and the house; that the legislators chosen by a few electors were to be humane, wise, far-seeing, animated solely by consideration for the welfare of all those for whom they legislated." Hence Burke is constantly arguing that Parliamentary Reform was unnecessary. See note on p. 49, l. 26. Cf. p. 62, l. 1, and pp. 210-11.

l. 34. **property is sluggish, etc.,** Those who are well off naturally wish things to remain as they are. With reference to Burke's argument here we may say that, when owners of property are as careful to perform their duties, as they are to exact their rights, they need not fear any attacks.

P. 56, l. 2. **characteristic essence, etc.,** The right to property is the right of each to keep what he has made. But as one man can make more than another, the possessions of all cannot be the same.

l. 6. **a natural rampart, etc.,** Owners of large properties, just because their properties are large, will resist attacks upon the principle of property. Owners of small properties, on the other hand, may be willing to risk the little they have on the chance of getting more.

l. 17. **never intend, as they do not intend to share with the people the plunder which they obtain by the people's aid, they do not of course think it necessary to warn the people that the plunder will not be sufficient to enrich them all.**

l. 21. **It makes our weakness, etc.** We accumulate property, not to spend it upon ourselves, but to entail it upon our descendants.

l. 24. **concerned, interested.** A man of wealth and position likes to think that, even when he is dead, his family will be rich and distinguished. By entailing his property he can secure that it shall be so. He will therefore do everything that he can to secure a peaceful succession of the heirs in each generation.

l. 29. **in the last event, etc.,** it is the final court of appeal.

l. 30. **though not necessarily, the electors are free to choose whom they please.** As a matter of fact they generally choose men of rank and wealth. Cf. p. 48, l. 24, and note on p. 55, l. 27.

l. 34. **the ballast, they are a steadying element in politics.**

P. 57, l. 3. **coxcombs of philosophy, pretenders to political wisdom.**

l. 5. **unnatural, etc.** The privileges of the nobility are

accorded willingly, they harm nobody, they produce beneficial results. These assertions are proved below, p. 155.

l. 9. a problem of arithmetic, Burke maintains that power is to be given to wisdom and virtue, not to numbers.

l. 10. the lamp-post, etc., when enforced not by reason but by violence. The mob in Paris frequently hanged those whom they disliked on the nearest lamp-post. Cf. "Neither was it accounted weakness but discretion in him that would not dispute his best with Adrianus Cæsar; excusing himself, *That it was reason to yield to him that commanded thirty legions.*"—Bacon.

l. 11. The will, etc., what they want is not always what is good for them.

l. 14. country attornies, etc., see p. 46, l. 15.

l. 17. betrayed their trust, been false to the interests of their order, cf. p. 51, l. 22.

l. 19. to have strayed, etc., to have given power to any rather than to those who are fitted for it. See note on p. 53, l. 2.

l. 21. rational liberty, as opposed to license. Cf. p. 7, l. 27.

l. 22. paper circulation, see note on p. 42, l. 35.

l. 23. stock-jobbing, cf. p. 48, l. 14, and p. 220, l. 1 *seqq.*

l. 25. the republican system, see note on p. 54, l. 4.

l. 29. its work, that namely of dividing France into a number of self-governing departments. When this task is accomplished, the Assembly will find that its power is gone. For the Assembly legislates in obedience to the dictates of the mob of Paris; and, as one department is as good as another, eighty-two of them will not of course consent to be governed by or to pay taxes to one. See p. 221.

l. 33. calling itself, in reality it represented, not the nation, but Paris.

l. 34. its own portion, the lands of the church were scattered throughout the different departments.

l. 35. more just, men have a right to what they make, but not to what they steal.

P. 58, l. 2. In this, etc., If subjection to Paris is to be substituted for subjection to the old privileged classes, what will the people have gained by the change?

l. 5. no capital city, there cannot be a chief city of the kingdom, because France is no longer one kingdom. Each department is an independent state. "The old division of the territory by provinces was abandoned, and France was divided into eighty-three departments, all as nearly as possible of the same extent,



and named after geographical features, such as rivers and mountains. The eighty-three departments were subdivided into 374 districts. In every department was an elected administrative body for the management of its affairs; in every district an elected administrative body, subordinate to the administration of the department, for the management of affairs special to the district. These bodies were composed each of a general council and a permanent executive styled the directory. In every district the former divisions, called communes, were left unaltered. Of these communes there were no less than 44,000 in France, some being large towns, whilst others were mere villages. The local affairs of these communes were placed under the direction of municipalities. The members of these municipalities were elected by all men inhabiting the commune twenty-five years old, and paying yearly in direct taxes, according to a reformed system of taxation, a sum varying from eighteenpence to two shillings, the value of three days' labour. Persons qualified to vote were required to serve in the national guard, and were called active citizens, whilst those disqualified were known as passive citizens. For the election of the administrative bodies of the district and the department, as well as of deputies to the legislature, the system adopted was by two degrees. There were many primary assemblies, consisting of all active citizens in each department, each of which chose a certain number of electors, who in turn elected the administrative bodies of the district and of the department, as well as the deputies who were to represent the department in the legislature. The qualification for being a member of a municipality, or of any administrative body, was the payment yearly in direct taxes of a sum varying from six to eight shillings. A special and higher qualification was required for sitting in the legislature—the payment in direct taxes of a marc, in value nearly fifty shillings.”—Gardiner, *French Revolution*, pp. 65-6. The whole system is ridiculed by Burke, pp. 194 *seqq.*

l. 9. **they persevere**, etc., they insist on calling him king, though they have stripped him of all the powers which make a king. Cf. pp. 223 *seqq.*

l. 12. **the army**, this subject is dealt with at length, pp. 236 *seqq.*

l. 13. **its constituents**, those who elected the members of the Assembly.

l. 14. **its despotism**, i.e. the despotism of Paris. Paris rules the Assembly (note on p. 57, l. 29); so long therefore as the Assembly remains unchanged, Paris rules the nation. **It will make efforts**, money is power: and it is Paris that manufactures at will the money of the country. Cf. p. 218, l. 28, “Those whose operations can take from, or add ten per cent. to, the possessions

of every man in France, must be the masters of every man in France."

Pp. 58-69. *The Revolution is lauded and its excesses and failures palliated with a purpose. The French are represented as having fought successfully for freedom, and English malcontents think the occasion favourable for inciting Englishmen to do the same. But Englishmen will be unwise if they give up their actual freedom for the disorder, the poverty, and the license, to which France has been reduced. Dr. Price represents the English as not free, because but few of them have votes, and these votes can always be bought. And, as he considers elective governments alone legitimate, he must desire a revolution to sweep away the House of Commons, which is only partially representative, and the House of Lords and the Monarchy, which are not representative at all. From the writings and speeches of the members of the Revolution Society it is evident that they are willing to face any calamity to the country to give effect to their own views. The appeal to the rights of men by which they justify their attack on the English government would justify a similar attack upon all governments. The real rights of men are those advantages which society was instituted to secure. But society cannot exist without control: and the form of government is settled by convention. If men wish to abandon the state of nature for the state of society, they must submit to those limitations of their natural rights which social life requires. They cannot have the advantages of society and the freedom of nature too. Government is a limitation of man's natural rights for his own good. The extent and mode of the limitation will depend upon circumstances. It requires great experience of the varying tempers and dispositions of men, so to organize a state as to secure to the people the maximum of the benefits for which the state exists. For statesmanship is not an affair of ideals and abstract rights, but is concerned with what is practicable. Above all things, right is not to be confounded with might. It cannot be too often repeated that man in society can only claim what is for his good, since that is the end for which society was instituted.*

l. 19. the voice of God and man, nature and experience, cf. p. 55, l. 8.

l. 24. see further, etc. Burke says that we can see only the principles and immediate effects of the Revolution. Dr. Price and his friends look beyond these to the example which the French have set.

l. 31. *your*, who upholds and praises what you have done.

l. 31. **to have speculated**, etc., By dint of thinking on the subject he has worked himself to a high pitch of enthusiasm.

P. 59, l. 7. **big with**, full of: lit. pregnant.

l. 9. **did run before him**, he was right in supposing that his audience had anticipated what he was going to say.

l. 13. **an error**, ironical.

l. 15. **ever-waking vigilance**, Burke is thinking of the sleepless dragon of the Greek mythology, who guarded the golden apples of the goddess Juno in the garden of the Hesperides.

l. 19. **secured**, kept safe.

l. 21. **exertions**, there is no need to strive for what we have already.

l. 27. **milky**, weak. Shakespeare uses the expression 'milky gentleness,' and 'the milk of human-kindness.' Elsewhere Burke says, "We must soften into a credulity below the milkiness of infancy, to think all men virtuous."

l. 28. **borne**, etc., We find it easy to bear the sufferings of others.

l. 34. **Is our monarchy**, etc., This passage contains a summary of the results of the French Revolution, as they appeared to Burke.

P. 60, l. 1. **geometrical and arithmetical**, see p. 204, l. 22.

l. 5. **to bribe**, etc., See p. 135, l. 25.

l. 7. **patriotic contribution**, cf. p. 43, l. 27; and p. 259, l. 22.

l. 9. **the land tax**, etc., these were the two taxes devoted to paying the expenses of the English navy.

l. 13. **democracies**, see note on p. 58, l. 5.

l. 14. **unknown**, Burke means, as he has already asserted on p. 58, that there was no power strong enough to hold them together.

l. 17. **debauchery**, this is explained on p. 241.

l. 18. **a donative**, This was the word regularly used to signify the presents by which the Roman emperors conciliated and kept the support of their troops. Burke calls it "a terrible precedent" because it teaches the army to demand a price for its obedience.

l. 22. **by feeding them**, see p. 57, l. 34.

l. 26. **two armies**, Burke alludes to the formation of the National Guard.

l. 30. **in point**, relevant.

1. 32. a dull sluggish race, we are not sensitive to grievances, nor energetic enough to throw them off.

P. 61, l. 1. sovereign, supreme.

1. 5. is not free, Price's argument appears to be a sufficiently harmless commonplace. Cf. "That man who proposes to exclude permanently five millions of his countrymen from the right which the Constitution of his country makes sacred in his eyes, I say that is the man that separates Englishmen into two nations, and makes it impossible that we should be wholly or permanently a contented people. I demand, then, this, which is but the right of our Constitution, that the House of Commons shall be made freely and fairly to represent the Commons and the people of the United Kingdom. England has long been famous for the enjoyment of personal freedom by her people .. I want to know then why it is that her people should not be free to vote ... I claim for them the right of admission, through their representatives, into the most ancient and the most venerable Parliament which at this hour exists among men; and when they are thus admitted, and not till then, it may be truly said that England, the august mother of free nations, herself is free." John Bright, *Speech on Reform*.

1. 17. fundamental grievance, this is at the root of the whole matter.

1. 26. the Treasury, the Ministers. See notes on p. 49, l. 26; and p. 55, l. 27. Burke emphasizes the influence of the Treasury at elections in his *Present Discontents*.

1. 35. generality, etc. The term "inadequate representation," is vague and misleading. Theoretically it should seem that representation is not adequate unless every important body is represented, and every member represents some considerable constituency. This principle was urged in Burke's days, and has since been acted upon. Speaking on Parliamentary Reform in 1853, John Bright said, "Three hundred and thirty members of the House of Commons—more than one half of the whole number—are returned by less than one-sixth even of that small number of persons to whom the franchise is entrusted. You give votes to a million out of six millions, and half the House of Commons is elected by less than 200,000 of these electors! And then, if bribery be somewhat common, and if intimidation, wherever it can be practised, is almost universal, how can you come to the conclusion that there is any real freedom of election whatever, when you survey the whole representation of the counties and boroughs of the kingdom?" With Burke, however, these arguments had no weight. He was afraid of organic change. His argument is that a representation is adequate under which the well-being of the people is, as a matter of fact,

provided for. On p. 211 he argues that when a man is regarded as a member for the country, though nominally the representative of only a part of it, then the relative representation of the parts is unimportant.

P. 62, l. 2. *under which*, etc., notice the fallacy. As the circumstances of a country change its modes of government must change too.

l. 8. *our practical constitution*, *i.e.* its actual working and effects, as opposed to its theoretical form. Bright's conclusion is the direct opposite of Burke's—"You may have electors, a million or more, and you may have canvassing, and nominations, and polls and returns, and houses of legislation, and speeches, and the contention of parties, and divisions, and laws enacted, and yet there may be only the form of representation, and its life and spirit and reality may be altogether absent. All this we had previous to 1832: yet nobody says now that we had representation before then."

l. 12. *abuse of power*, etc., See p. 61, l. 21.

l. 20. *value themselves, pride themselves. systematic, thorough and consistent.*

l. 33. *bastardized*, etc., a strong expression for 'rendered illegitimate.'

l. 34. *no representative*, because the peers sit by hereditary right.

P. 63, l. 3. *a title*, *i.e.* as giving to it a right to reign. The acts of non-representative bodies are void. The Revolution was the work of a House of Commons, which was imperfectly representative, and of a House of Lords, which was not representative at all. The settlement of the crown, therefore, made at the Revolution, was void.

l. 20. *A man amongst them*, Dr. Priestley. He was a Unitarian minister, who both wrote and spoke very strongly against established churches. He regarded any connection between church and state as unchristian. Burke says, in the text, that he was ready to purchase the separation of church from state at any price. He would have abolished the church, without reflecting whether government could stand without it: or he would have destroyed government itself, that the church, being deprived of its support, might fall. The expression "alliance between church and state" is a reference to a book written by Bishop Warburton to justify an established church with a test. Burke's views on church and state are given below, p. 109.

l. 26. *with what a steady eye*, they do not shrink from the prospect.

l. 33. *possessed*, as if by an evil spirit. Cf. "When the even

was come, they brought unto him many that were *possessed* with devils: and he cast out the spirits with his word." *Matt. vii.* 16.

1. 36. *whose merits, etc.* Burke often insists that the legitimacy of a government is not to be tried by any abstract principle of right. A government is justified by its *proved* adaptation to the feelings and wants of those who live under it.

P. 64, l. 7. *prescription, a right created by long continuance.*

1. 8. *temperament, modification.* Burke shows on pp. 66, 67, that the existence of government implies a limitation of natural rights.

1. 13. *speculatists, theorists. do not quadrate with, do not square with: are not in accordance with.*

1. 16. *greenest, freshest: most recent.*

1. 18. *title, a right to the power which they exercise.*

1. 19. *clumsy, because these abstract theories are not fitted to solve the practical problems of politics.* For 'metaphysics' see note on p. 7, l. 35, and p. 8, l. 19.

1. 22. *There let him, etc., said by Neptune, god of the sea, of Æolus, god of the winds, who had raised a storm without his permission.* *Virg. Æn.* l. 140.

1. 25. *a Levanter, a stormy east wind.* The word *Levant*, which is generally used to describe the countries on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, means literally the quarter in which the sun rises (*Lat. levare, to raise, French, se lever, to rise*).

1. 26. *to break up, etc., the words are taken from the Biblical account of the flood.*

1. 30. *the real rights, see note on p. 3, l. 16.*

1. 32. *are such, etc., because the advantages of society, which are men's real rights, cannot coexist with their pretended rights, i.e. with the unlimited freedom of nature.*

1. 35. *law, etc.* The laws are a systematic provision for maintaining the conditions requisite to the enjoyment of the advantages of social life.

P. 65, l. 1. *as between their fellows, as between themselves and the other members of the society.*

1. 2. *politic, political: i.e. in positions of authority.*

1. 4. *to the means, etc., to the occupation of the soil.*

1. 6. *to instruction, etc., to the ministrations of the church.*

1. 13. *partnership, society is compared to a trading company, in which the income of a shareholder depends on the amount of capital which he has invested in the business.* The idea of such a partnership, however, does not fully express the nature and object of society. See p. 107, l. 31.

1. 20. the civil social man, man in the state of society, as opposed to man in the state of nature. In society, some must rule and some must be ruled. The form of government must be settled by positive agreement in each case.

1. 24. descriptions, kinds.

1. 28. do not, etc., the state of nature is prior to society : and the freedom of nature is incompatible with the restraints implied by society. This passage is explained by the account of the theories of Locke and Rousseau given in the Introd. The expression 'surrender in trust' especially is suggested by Locke.

1. 33. uncovenanted, before the social compact.

P. 66, l. 2. That he may obtain. The individual cannot be trusted to decide impartially in cases which affect himself. And, even if he could, he would not have the power to enforce his own decisions, or to resist the aggressions of others.

1. 9. their abstract perfection, etc., men only agreed to be governed because they had experienced the practical inconvenience of the unlimited freedom of nature.

1. 23. the restraints, etc., He has said already, p. 57, l. 11, that "the will of the many, and their interest, must often differ."

1. 30. positive, settled by convention. It is opposed to *natural*.

1. 36. of human nature, Elsewhere Burke says, "Nations are governed by the same methods, and on the same principles, by which an individual without authority is often able to govern those who are his equals or superiors ; by a knowledge of their temper, and by a judicious management of it." We can all of us recall cases in which well-meant legislation has failed because it has not aroused the expected sympathy, nor enlisted the expected support, or because it has given unforeseen offence to some party, or has aroused some unexpected passion.

P. 67, l. 1. which are to be pursued, etc., which political institutions should be so contrived as to secure.

1. 3. recruits to its strength, its strength must be continually kept up and maintained, just as a man's must, if he is to avoid disease. distempers, disorders. See note on p. 33, l. 26.

1. 8. professor of metaphysics, the exponent of abstract principles.

1. 14. moral, opposed to *physical*.

1. 16. its excellence, for instance, the substitution of local self-government for official administration in India probably involves some loss of efficiency. But it is just the experience of difficulty and failure that will teach the people how to govern themselves.

1. 18. plausible schemes, etc., for instance, it is contended by some that the well-meant attempt to protect the Deccan ryot in

his dealings with the Saokar has ended in destroying the ryot's credit altogether.

l. 24. **practical**, The question for the politician is not what is theoretically the best form of government? nor, what rights have peoples and governments in the abstract? but, How, under the given conditions, can the maximum of good be secured to the subjects?

l. 26. **even more experience**, etc., cf. "Neither can the experience of one man's life furnish examples and precedents for the events of one man's life," Bacon, *Adv.* l. ii. 3.

l. 32. **approved**, proved : demonstrated. See note on p. 63, l. 36.

l. 34, **by the laws of nature**, universally and necessarily. See note on p. 10, l. 26. The metaphor repeats what he has said before, that social life is impossible if men insist on retaining the absolute liberty which they enjoy in the state of nature. The meaning of the whole passage is expressed clearly and at length on p. 190, and pp. 207, 208.

P. 68, l. 17. **anomalously**, at the sacrifice of formal consistency or symmetry.

l. 20. **overcare** of, undue attention to.

l. 22. **are all extremes**, cf. p. 64, l. 8. "These admit no temperament," etc. The idea, which was suggested by Aristotle, is also expressed by Montesquieu. "The spirit of the legislator should be the spirit of moderation. Political good is, like moral good, always found between two extremes." *Esprit des Loix*, bk. xxix. ch. 1.

l. 23. **metaphysically**, in the abstract.

l. 24. **morally and politically false**, because they altogether overlook the fact that a man's position in the state must depend upon his character and capacities. **in a sort of middle**, They cannot have everything, nor, on the other hand, are they to give up everything. The problem is to secure the maximum of good at the least cost. Cf. "No lines can be laid down for civil or political wisdom. They are a matter incapable of exact definition. But, though no man can draw a stroke between the confines of day and night, yet light and darkness are upon the whole tolerably distinguishable."—*Present Discontents*.

l. 29. **between evil and evil**, Elsewhere Burke says, "It is no inconsiderable part of wisdom to know how much of an evil ought to be tolerated, lest by attempting a degree of purity impracticable in degenerate times and manners, instead of cutting off the subsisting ill practices, new corruptions might be produced for the concealment and security of the old." This is a consideration which should always be present to the minds of



those reformers who are urging government to interfere with social and religious practices in India.

1. 32. **denominations, numbers.** Political reason considers men not in the abstract (metaphysically), *i.e.* as mere men, nor mathematically, *i.e.* as so many equal units, but morally, *i.e.* as individuals distinguished from one another by important differences of temper, character, and capacity. Elsewhere Burke says "This is the true touchstone of all theories which regard man and the affairs of men—does it suit his nature in general?—does it suit his nature as modified by his habits?" and again, "The excellence of mathematics and metaphysics is to have but one thing before you; but he forms the best judgment in all moral disquisitions who has the greatest number and variety of considerations in one view before him, and can take them in with the best possible consideration of the middle results of all."

P. 69, l. 1. **has no right, etc.**, Mr. Moyley puts Burke's meaning clearly—"Politics is an empirical art, with morality for its standard."

1. 2. **Men have no right, etc.** Burke vehemently opposed those who urged war with America on the ground of England's *right* to tax her own subjects. He said, "I am not going into the distinctions of rights, not attempting to mark their boundaries. I do not enter into these metaphysical distinctions. I hate the very sound of them. Show the thing you contend for to be reason; show it to be common sense; show it to be the means of attaining some useful end; and then I am content to allow it what dignity you please."

1. 4. **pleasant, humorous.** He refers to the Roman poet Horace, *Ars Poet.* 465. The Sicilian Empedocles is said to have jumped into the crater of Ætna, hoping that, all traces of his body being lost, people might suppose he had been taken up as a god. One of his slippers, however, was blown up from the crater, so that his real fate was known.

1. 9. **poetic licence, a liberty taken by a poet.** Burke chooses the expression purposely, because it is the phrase regularly used to denote those deviations from common usage which are allowed in the language of poetry.

1. 10. **franchises of Parnassus, privileges of poets.** Parnassus was a hill in Greece, sacred to Apollo and the Muses, the patrons of music and poetry. a divine, a theologian, like Dr. Price, whose folly equals that of Empedocles.

Pp. 69-74. *A healthy society no more requires constant talk about rebellion than a healthy body requires constant doses of medicine. Nor does the cause of freedom owe anything to those who talk most loudly of resistance. For either they never intend to submit to the labour of struggling against oppression, or they are*

so foolish as to despise every effort of resistance which does not go to the length of rebellion. Those of them who do remain true to their professed principles are generally men with a hobby, to which they are ready to sacrifice everybody and everything. Such are the men who now rule France. By perpetually contemplating revolution and rebellion, they become callous, and teach others to become callous, to the suffering which they involve. At last they become enamoured of revolution for its own sake. Price, as Peters had done in like case before him, profanes the words of Scripture to express his joy at the brutal and savage treatment which the French king has received from a portion of his subjects.

l. 15. anniversary sermons, see p. 5, l. 28.

l. 17. will cheat, etc., men will be beguiled by false assertions into a false conception of the real aim and methods of the authors of the Revolution of 1688. Cf. p. 18, l. 13, "the spurious Revolution principles of the Old Jewry."

l. 21. making the extreme medicine, for the metaphor, cf. p. 33, l. 23, and p. 42, l. 18.

l. 22. the habit, cf. p. 27, l. 6. valetudinary, sickly: in weak health. Mercury sublimate and cantharides are the names of two stimulants. An independent spirit is to a state what health is to the body. Resistance is the remedy for political disorder, as medicine is for bodily diseases. But as we know that a man is abnormally weak who requires constant tonics to keep up his strength, so it is a sign that national character has degenerated, if the people can only be prevented from sinking into servility by constant incitement to rebellion. A healthy man is well without medicine: a healthy state is free without rebellion.

l. 26. of remedy, the word of shows in what the distemper or disease consists. A constant need of medicine is in itself a disease.

l. 27. vulgar and prostituted, unworthy and perverted. the spring, the vigour. Lit. it is the *kamán* of a machine. Where there is most talk about resistance there is generally least courage to resist. He illustrates this in the next sentence by reference to the case of Rome.

l. 32. Where boys, etc. Juvenal, *Sat.* vii. 151. The class is said to storm at tyrants, in the sense that the boys recited declamations in praise of tyrannicide. Juvenal's *Satires* relate to Rome in the first, and the earlier years of the second, century of the Christian era.

P. 70, l. 1. dissoluteness, licentiousness. extravagant, not kept within bounds. See note on p. 41, l. 6.

1. 2. **high-bred**, extreme.

1. 3. **thorough-paced**, thorough-going : complete.

1. 5. **practical**, reasonable: such as could be effected under the circumstances. It is the opposite of *visionary*. Those of us, the members of the party of which Lord Rockingham was the leader.

1. 7. **tories**, supporters of the extreme claims of the monarch. In his pamphlet *On the Present Discontents*, Burke argues that a deliberate attempt was made by the Court to govern absolutely through the influence which it could bring to bear on members of Parliament. The measures suggested by the democratic party to restore the freedom of Parliament and the country were universal suffrage, equal electoral districts, short Parliaments, and the exclusion from Parliament of placemen and pensioners on the Crown. Burke says that the proposers of these measures, having failed to carry them, thought, or pretended to think, that opposition to Court influence was hopeless; so they went over to the side of the Court in order to enjoy the good things which the Court had at its disposal. The 'practical and moderate resistance' advocated by Burke consisted in an endeavour to make the Ministry really responsible to the House of Commons, to make the House of Commons really responsible to the electors, and to improve the moral tone of the electors. See notes on p. 55, l. 27, and p. 61, l. 35. **Hypocrisy**, Hypocrite is the Greek word for an actor. So it signifies generally a man who plays a part, or assumes a character not his own. It is just as easy to profess noble sentiments as base ones, and the hypocrite never intends to act up to his professions.

1. 10. **fraud**, the 'thorough-paced courtiers' whom he has just been considering were deliberately false to their principles.

1. 11. **ranting**, rhetorical: declamatory: high-flown.

1. 12. **professors**, men who talk rather than act: men who make professions merely, without acting up to them.

1. 13. **qualified, limited**: not going to the length of rebellion. **civil**, lit. befitting a citizen, i.e. not involving a disturbance of social order. **legal**, not involving any violation of the existing law. What was wanted was not revolution, but reform.

1. 15. It is with them, etc., they will be contented with nothing short of war.

1. 18. **principle**, consistent adherence to a rule of conduct believed to be right.

1. 19. **interest, profit**. As they gain nothing by their own principles, they are ready to exchange them for any which will profit them in any way,

1. 21. **more steady and persevering**, less ready to abandon their

principles, and more constant in their endeavours to give effect to them.

l. 22. *out of parliament*, not members of Parliament, and, therefore, not exposed to the temptation of the bribes by which the Court bought the support of members of the House of Commons.

l. 25. *bad citizens*, because they will sacrifice the interests of their country to the furtherance of their own crotchets. *unsure connexions*, their loyalty to their party is not to be depended on. They will join and support whatever party can best further their schemes at the moment. In Burke's eyes this is a grave offence. At the end of his pamphlet *On the Present Discontents* Burke offers a vigorous defence of party government, and of fidelity to party. He argues that men can only act effectually by acting in concert: that they cannot act in concert unless they can act with confidence: and that they cannot act with confidence unless they are bound together by common opinions, common interests, and common affections. See note on p. 51, l. 8.

l. 28. *estimation, value*. at best, The most that can be said for them is that they do not care about the existing state of things, even if they do not wish to disturb it.

l. 35. *stretched prerogative*, they advocate an extreme extension of the prerogative. See note on p. 26, l. 35.

P. 71, l. 6. *militant*, still fighting: not yet victorious. It is the Latin word *militare*, to serve as a soldier. In a similar sense the *English Prayer Book* applies the word to the Christian church on earth, to signify the struggle which it carries on against sin and error.

l. 7. *it is triumphant*, observe that Burke represents the French Revolution as being the work of a few self-seeking agitators. He takes no account of the great national forces which were at the back of the revolutionary leaders.

l. 8. *when its power, etc.*, when it can do what it likes.

l. 9. *description*, cf. p. 38, l. 25. Bad men are to be found in every class: nor is any class composed exclusively of bad men. cf. p. 54, l. 22.

l. 12. *keeping terms with*, maintaining friendly relations with.

l. 13. *under the name of religion, etc.*, cf. p. 12, l. 9.

l. 15. *temper*, the word properly signifies the process of hardening metal. Thus the blade of a sword is said to be well *tempered*.

l. 16. *desperate, extreme*: lit. such as are resorted to when men have *abandoned the hope* of succeeding by ordinary means.

l. 18. *a gratuitous taint*, the mind is corrupted without anything being gained by it.

1. 22. **his nature**, the fact that he is constituted in such a way that he must be depraved by their teaching. The meaning of the passage is this :—The feelings which nature has implanted in man are a safeguard against wrong-doing. For example, our natural sympathy with the sufferings of others prevents us from doing anything which will cause them pain. But revolution necessarily involves suffering. Whoever therefore familiarizes men with the idea of revolution familiarizes them with, and consequently renders them indifferent to, the idea of human suffering. Later on in the book Burke dwells upon the cruelty with which the French clergy were treated.

1. 24. **the heart**, the seat of the feelings. Right conduct may come either from an instinctive aversion from what is wrong, or from a reasoned perception of what is right. These men, as explained in the preceding note, blunt men's instinctive dislike of evil, and yet do nothing to clear or strengthen their intellectual perception of right. Elsewhere Burke says that "the wise legislators of all countries have aimed at improving instincts into morals, and at grafting the virtues on the stock of the natural affections."

1. 26. **well-placed**, a well-placed sympathy is sympathy for what really deserves sympathy. The pupils of Dr. Price are taught to sympathize with what is bad.

1. 27. **the Old Jewry**, see note p. 11, l. 8.

1. 31. **flat**, dull : uninteresting. The word would be properly applied, say, to soda water which has stood so long as to lose its sparkle. **vapid**, tasteless : insipid.

1. 35. **still**, always. **unanimating**, unexciting. Burke insinuates that they are weary of the monotony of peace and quiet.

P. 72, l. 1. **juvenile**, such as would naturally be felt only by the young. A man's sensibility generally becomes dulled as he grows older. Cf. p. 277, l. 5, "Old as I am," etc. **warmth**, enthusiasm. Cf. p. 17, l. 29.

1. 3. **peroration**, the close of a speech.

1. 4. **Pisgah**, Price contemplating from his pulpit (p. 12, l. 24) the effects of the French Revolution is compared to the Jewish leader Moses, who, before his death, surveyed from the height of Mount Pisgah the land of Palestine, into which the Jews after long wandering in the Arabian desert were about to enter. **a promised land**, because, when the Jews were held captive in Egypt, God *promised* that they should be delivered, and should settle in Palestine. For the metaphor cf. Macaulay's *Essay on Bacon*, "Cowley has, in one of his finest poems, compared Bacon to Moses standing on Mount Pisgah. It is to Bacon, we think, as he appears in the first book of the *Novum Organum*, that the comparison applies with peculiar felicity. There we see the

great Lawgiver looking round from his lonely elevation on an infinite expanse; behind him a wilderness of dreary sands and bitter waters in which successive generations have sojourned, always moving, yet never advancing, reaping no harvest, and building no abiding city; before him a goodly land, a land of promise, a land flowing with milk and honey. While the multitude below saw only the flat sterile desert in which they had so long wandered, bounded on every side by a near horizon, or diversified only by some deceitful mirage, he was gazing from a far higher stand on a far lovelier country, following with his eye the long course of fertilizing rivers, through ample pastures, and under the bridges of great capitals, measuring the distance of marts and havens, and portioning out all these wealthy regions from Dan to Beersheba (lit. = from one end of Palestine to the other)."

l. 8. Lord, now lettest, etc., An aged Jew named Simeon, having lived long enough to see Christ, expressed his willingness to die, in a passage beginning "Lord, now lettest," etc.

l. 9. thy salvation, viz., Christ who was sent by God to save the world. Price compares the French Revolution to the advent of Christ into the world.

l. 16. led in triumph, Burke's account of this leading in triumph is given on p. 78. The word *triumph* signifies properly the procession of a victorious Roman general, followed by his captives and the spoils of his campaign, through the streets of Rome to the temple of Jupiter. The people in Paris were angry at the king's delay in approving the proceedings of the Assembly: a war-like ministry had been nominated: foreign troops were being collected: it was found that the anti-revolutionists were meditating the removal of the king to Metz: and lastly the national cockade had been insulted at a banquet of the king's guards. Under the circumstances it was not unnatural that the people should be anxious to secure the person of the king; and, with an excited mob, some violence at any rate was inevitable. The affair is thus described in Gardiner's *History*: "Early on the morning of October 5th, many thousands of hungry women began a march from Paris to Versailles, stopping and forcing all of their own sex whom they met on the way to accompany them. Bands of men soon followed, and the national guards, in place of opposing the movement, compelled Lafayette to march at their head after the mob. There was heavy rain all day, and the women on their arrival at Versailles were weary, fasting, and wet. They surrounded the palace, and broke into the hall of the Assembly, shouting in reply to the speeches of the deputies, 'Bread, bread, and not so many words!' All through the day new bands continued to arrive, composed of both men and women. The royal body-guard, between whom and the mob shots were exchanged,

was withdrawn within the palace gates. A little before midnight Lafayette at last arrived at the head of an orderly force of 20,000 men. He set watches at the palace gates, and afterwards entered to take a short rest. But at daybreak some of the mob broke in to the palace court, killed two soldiers of the body-guard who fired on them, wounded others, and burst into the ante-room of the Queen's bedchamber. Marie Antoinette, roused by her women, fled for her life, to the King's apartment. The alarm was given, and national guards arrived on the spot in time to avert more bloodshed, and to drive back the intruders. Louis, who had not been able to decide on flight while he still had opportunity, yielded to the wish of the populace. A dense crowd was assembled in front of the palace, shouting, 'The King to Paris!' Louis stepped out on a balcony in sign of assent. The popular instinct rightly fixed on the Queen as much more hostile to the revolution than the King. As she stepped out after her husband, with her girl and boy by her side, voices from below shouted, 'No children.' Pushing her children back, she bravely advanced without hesitation alone, while Lafayette, afraid for her safety, sought to make her peace with the people by stooping and kissing her hand. All steps were now turned towards Paris. First went a disorderly mob, rejoicing in their capture of the royal family, and shouting that bread would be plentiful, for they were bringing with them the baker, the baker's wife, and the baker's boy. The heads of the slain body-guards, ghastly trophies of their triumph, were carried on pikes. The royal carriages, surrounded by national guards, followed in the wake of the mob. On their arrival in Paris, the King and Queen were conducted to the Tuileries."—pp. 61, 2.

l. 19. *light, enlightenment.* Cf. '*illumination*,' p. 73, l. 15. It is an ironical reference to the words of Dr. Price quoted in the preceding paragraph.

l. 26. *high treason.* He was tried at the time of the Restoration, and was executed with other regicides. This explains the words, 'he neither departed so soon as he wished, nor in peace,' p. 73, l. 9. it was deposed, evidence was given.

l. 27. *the Apostle, etc.,* cf. p. 31, l. 23.

P. 73, l. 4. *very triumphantly,* because his triumph over the king was celebrated in the chapel of the king's own palace of Whitehall in London. Cf. p. 11, l. 34.

l. 7. *Simeon,* see note on p. 73, l. 8.

l. 12. *Pontiff, chief priest.* Cf. p. 14, l. 15.

l. 13. *poor good, etc.,* terms expressive of contemptuous pity. Cf. p. 5, l. 10.

l. 16. *superstition and error,* p. 72, l. 11.

l. 18. **repeat**, used intransitively.

l. 19. **title**, cf. p. 16, l. 34.

l. 21. **sally**, outburst. Price has copied the very words used by the enthusiastic Peters in 1648.

l. 24. **heroic**, the term is applied to any one who undertakes a task requiring exceptional courage and power. The words **fabricators**, **cashierers**, and **electors**, refer to the three principles mentioned on p. 17, l. 5.

l. 28. **the donative**, see note on p. 60, l. 18. After listening to the sermon, they all felt that Dr. Price had made them a *present* of valuable knowledge. Not wishing to be niggardly, they hurried to share with the French the precious gift which they had obtained without paying anything for it (gratuitously).

l. 30. **they adjourned**, etc., cf. p. 5, l. 31 *seqq.*

l. 32. **in whom the fumes**, etc., who was still under the influence of the enthusiasm which had prompted his sermon. The **tripod** was the stool from which the priestess spoke. See notes on p. 11, ll. 28 and 29.

l. 35. **transmitted**, etc., see note on p. 9, l. 20.

P. 74, l. 2. **nunc dimittis**, the beginning of the Latin version of the words used by Simeon. **prophetic**, in the words following on those quoted on p. 72, l. 8, Simeon *prophesied* that Christ would bring the knowledge of the truth to the whole world, and that he would be an honour to the Jewish race.

l. 4. **unnatural**, the meaning of this word is explained in the note on p. 71, l. 22.

l. 8. **unmanly**, it is unworthy of a man to insult those who are unable to defend themselves. Cf. below, ll. 18-20. For the meaning of **generosity** see note on p. 39, l. 34. **irreligious**, men should thank God for their success, and not celebrate it as if it were due to themselves.

l. 9. **the moral taste**, the instinctive sense of decency. The word **taste**, which is applied properly to the palate, is extended so as to signify the power of discriminating what is best in art, literature, and conduct.

l. 13. **Onondaga**, the name of an Indian village. Burke in his account of America, pt. 2, ch. iv., gives a description of the brutal methods of warfare practised by the American Indians. They preserved as trophies *the scalps* of the foes whom they killed.

Pp. 74-84. *France generally did not approve the insult offered to the King. The Assembly would, if it had been strong enough, have punished the authors of it. But the Assembly, honourable though some of its members may be, is not free to*



*think, or speak, or act, as it pleases. It is in a state of disgraceful subjection to the degraded, ignorant, violent mob of Paris, by whom it was even compelled to insult the King by congratulating him on the good results likely to ensue from the violence which had been offered to him. History will record, to the eternal shame of those who originated it and took part in it, the outrage to the King, his wife, and children. The Revolution Society rejoice in this triumph, because it seemed likely to end in the murder of bishops and a King, both of whom they detest. In Burke's eyes, on the other hand, it was accompanied by every circumstance which could shock the feelings of a right-minded man. Its one redeeming feature was the noble demeanour of the august sufferers.*

l. 29. **apology** of, excuse for. The Assembly, though disapproving of it, was obliged to endure it. If we, who are quite free, approve of it, we voluntarily and deliberately approve of what is wrong.

l. 32. **compelled, forced.** Cf. p. 76, l. 3, 'the farce of deliberation.' The Assembly makes a show of debating and voting. But the vote in every case is a foregone conclusion. It dare not refuse to register the decrees of the mob.

l. 35. **whose constitution, etc.** For the purpose of electing deputies to the Third Estate, Paris had been divided into sixty districts. This arrangement, originally made for a temporary purpose, was now made permanent: and the government of the city was in the hands of the representatives of these districts. Originally there were 120 representatives, but the number was afterwards increased to 240, and finally to 300. These 300 representatives deliberated and decided on all questions where permanent regulation and more serious expenditure was concerned. The executive power was in the hands of the mayor and town-council, which was chosen by and from the 300 representatives. In addition to this each district had its own assembly with a president. See *Von Sybel*, bk. ii. chap. iv.

P. 75, l. 2. **an army**, the National Guard, which was formed after the dismissal of the popular minister, Necker, on the 11th July.

l. 6. **some hundreds of the members**, Some of the conservative members of the Assembly had fled from Paris on the plea that their lives were in danger. Burke praises those who were not so ready to despair. See *Gardiner*, pp. 63, 64.

l. 11. **at third hand**, measures are first decided in the political clubs of the city. They are then accepted by the Assembly, and finally ratified by the King.

l. 13. **coffee-houses**, in which the political clubs met. The

coffee-house in France takes the place of the tavern in England. For the number and influence of these clubs, see *Carlyle*, vol. ii. bk. 1, ch. 5.

l. 15. the lamp-post, see note on p. 57, l. 10.

l. 17. crude, hasty. See note on p. 39, f. 2. desperate, see note on p. 71, l. 16.

l. 18. a monstrous medley, etc. Cf. *Carlyle*, vol. ii. bk. 1, ch. 3.

l. 20. Catiline and Cethegus, these two Romans were engaged in a famous conspiracy in the middle of the 1st century B.C.

l. 22. monsters, unnatural shapes. The Latin word *monstrum* means properly a warning: and, as all extraordinary phenomena were regarded as supernatural warnings, it came to signify a prodigy, a portent, anything out of the ordinary course of nature.

l. 23. in academies, etc., Public meetings served for schools to prepare men for membership of political clubs. "In the garden, surrounded by book and coffee-shops, which was attached to the Palais Royal, a palace belonging to the Duke of Orleans, agitators, mounted on chairs and tables, discoursed to excited throngs on the sovereignty of the people." *Gardiner*, p. 42, cf. *Carlyle*, vol. i. bk. v. ch. 1.

l. 24. The word *seminary*, which means lit. a seed-garden, is used metaphorically for a place of education.

l. 29. superstition and ignorance, Similarly on p. 80, l. 5, he talks of "the mean superstitions of the heart." I have explained in the note on p. 71, l. 22, what is meant by referring humanity to the heart. Humanity is called the fruit of superstition and ignorance, because it excites a degree of respect which an enlightened man can see that it does not deserve. The enlightened man will consider, not the feelings of individuals, but the interests of the state. The word *superstition* means unreasoning reverence.

l. 35. the title, cf. p. 16, l. 34. It is the offences which give them a right to the honour. Mr. Payne says that an enactment was passed relieving the relatives of a condemned criminal of the feudal taint of felony, and that the brothers of one Agasse, who was condemned for forgery, obtained promotion in their battalion of the National Guard, and were publicly feasted and complimented.

P. 76, l. 1. the same end, the fate of a criminal.

l. 8. explode, See note on p. 28, l. 24. The word is appropriate here, because the proceedings of the Assembly are compared to a play.

l. 10. servile petulance, the impudence of a servant.

l. 12. the gallery, etc., the spectators usurp the functions of the members. Arthur Young, describing a sitting of the Assembly in June, 1789, says—"The spectators in the galleries are allowed to interfere in the debates by clapping their hands, and other noisy expressions of approbation; this is grossly indecent; it is also dangerous; for, if they are permitted to express approbation, they are, by parity of reasoning, allowed expressions of dissent, and they may hiss as well as clap; which it is said they have sometimes done;—this would be to overrule the debate and influence the deliberations."

l. 15. nec color, etc., from the *Pharsalia*, an epic poem by the Roman Lucan. Burke has altered the tense from the future to the past. In the original the line is part of a prophecy, put into the mouth of Cato, as to the effect of Pompey's death upon the liberties of Rome.

l. 18. the evil principle, Satan. Cf. p. 63, l. 10.

l. 21. from the heart, sincerely. Cf. p. 21, l. 33.

l. 23. burlesque, a ridiculous travesty, or caricature. For Burke's ideal of a representative body see p. 44, l. 9 *seqq.* institute, institution.

l. 27. have all the shame, because, being nominally the government, they are held responsible for what is done.

l. 34. a beautiful day, the expression was used by Bailly. Paine declares that he called it so because of its comparatively peaceful ending, and because the King had come to Paris, instead of being taken to Metz, which the Court party had hoped to make the seat of a new despotism.

P. 77, l. 1. the vessel, etc., a saying of Mirabeau.

l. 3. stiff, strong. The treatment of the King would hasten the progress of reform.

l. 4. our Preacher, Dr. Price, whose conduct and language we are criticizing.

l. 6. in their houses, It was on the 14th July, after the storming of the Bastille, that Foulon and Berthier were put to death. But they were hung in the streets, not killed in their houses. Foulon was an officer of government. The people were angry with him, because he was reported to have said that the people, if they were hungry, might eat grass. Berthier was Foulon's son-in-law.

l. 7. the blood spilled, etc., i.e. the men deserved their fate. This was said by Barnave, a young barrister, and a member of the extreme revolutionary party.

l. 9. disorders, On August 4th the Assembly had passed decrees declaring the feudal order destroyed; depriving seigneurs of the exclusive right of hunting and of keeping rabbits and pigeons;

abolishing serfdom, servile dues, and all special privileges belonging to towns, provinces, and corporations; laying open to all citizens, without regard to birth, civil, military, and ecclesiastical preferment; and finally abolishing tithes paid to the church, and making promise of ecclesiastical reform in the future. But these decrees were not practical laws. They were little more than an enunciation of general principles, in accordance with which reform was afterwards to be effected. Thus the mass of feudal dues had still to be rendered until compensation had been given to the proprietors: the old taxes were to be paid until a new system of taxation based on principles of equality had been introduced. The risings in the provinces, therefore, which had followed the storming of the Bastille in Paris, were not allayed by the passing of these decrees. In fact the passing of them only made the people still more unwilling to submit to burdens, which the Assembly itself had declared to be unjust. Thus violence, disorder, and resistance reigned in all directions. The Assembly took the government of the provinces into its own hands. The inevitable consequence was the openly declared insignificance of the ministers, whom no one could any longer regard as holding the reins of power. *Gardiner*, p. 50; and *Von Sybel*, bk. ii. ch. 3.

l. 17. a felicitation, alluding to the address presented to the King and Queen on January 3rd by a deputation of 60 members of the Assembly. "They (the Assembly) look forward to the happy day, when appearing in a body before a prince, the friend of the people, they shall present to him a collection of laws calculated for his happiness, and the happiness of all the French; when their respectful affection shall entreat a beloved King to forget the disorders of a tempestuous epoch," etc.—*Payne*.

l. 21. practical demonstrations, as opposed to mere professions of loyalty. They put off *doing* anything to show their loyalty until they had got the good which they expected.

l. 24. This address, etc., ironical.

l. 25. among the revolutions, etc. The political revolution was not the only one that was going on in France. Cf. p. 89, l. 27. Burke dwells at length on 'the change in the system of manners in France' in the first of his *Letters on a Regicidal Peace*.

l. 28. the water, the English Channel.

l. 29. frippery, old clothes: lit. clothes sold by a *fripier*, i.e. one who mends up old garments and then offers them for sale.

l. 30. in the old cut, we still stick to the old rules of behaviour. The word *cut* is properly used of a fashion in clothes. Burke employs it here because he has just compared manners to

clothes. Cf. "Behaviour seemeth to me as a garment of the mind."—*Bacon*.

l. 30. have not so far conformed, etc., we do not think it polite to convey an insult under the guise of a compliment. What they had said to the King was, in effect, this: "You have been ill-treated, but it is for your good and ours. We mean to obey you, but not until we have deprived you of the power of ordering us to do what we dislike."

P. 78, l. 3. our ordinary of Newgate, the priest who attends upon the criminals in the great gaol in London.

l. 5. is liberalized, etc., the Declaration of the Rights of Men by the Assembly had abolished all distinctions between man and man.

l. 6. his rank and arms, his position, viz. of equality with his fellow-men. The word *arms* is equivalent to *scutcheon*. The art of heraldry describes armorial bearings in proper terms, treats of their history, of the rules observed in their employment and transmission, of the manner in which by their means families and certain dignities are represented, and of their connexion with genealogies and titular rank. In the reign of Richard III. it was thought necessary to place the whole heraldry of the kingdom under control, which was done by forming a *College of Heraldry* under the presidency of the Earl Marshal. It was the duty of the College to take note of all existing arms, to allow none without authority, and to collect and combine the rules of blazonry into a system. The jurisdiction of the Court has been abolished, consequently the College no longer pretends to regulate by compulsory authority the heraldry of the kingdom. It still however grants arms, crests, and mottoes to anyone who applies for them. In the present day many who wish to possess armorial bearings, but have not inherited them, are content to invent them for themselves. *Encyclopædia Britannica*, s.v. *Heraldry*. The rise in rank given to the hangman by the declaration that all men are equal, may be compared to an addition to a man's armorial bearings. See note on p. 38, l. 2.

l. 8. generous, cf. p. 74, l. 19. He would not be so mean as to insult the fallen.

l. 10. leze nation, treason against the nation. The phrase was substituted by the Assembly for the old *lèse majesté*. Under the new regime, treason was to be considered an offence not against the king, but against the nation. *Lèse majesté* is the Latin *læsa maiestas*, lit. injured dignity, i.e. an offence against the sovereignty of the people, or of those whom the people invest with power. In the Imperial period the phrase was used to express offences against the Emperor.

l. 11. **executive powers**, There is a play on the word. The function of the hangman is to execute criminals. The King, whom the Assembly had insulted, was the head of the *executive*.

l. 13. **oblivion**, referring to the words 'to forget,' etc., p. 77.  
 l. 18. **Forgotten injuries give no pain**. Forgetfulness therefore is compared to 'an anodyne draught,' i.e. a medicine to allay pain. *Anodyne* is a Greek word meaning *painless*. thus **drugged**, i.e. when insult is one of the ingredients in the mixture. The natural effect of condolence and compliment is soothing. But, when they are couched in insulting language, instead of acting as an opiate, i.e. instead of deadening the sense of pain, they keep it alive in the mind.

l. 15. **ulcer**, a painful memory is compared to a sore which eats into (corrodes) the flesh.

l. 16. **amnesty**, the Greek for 'oblivion.'

l. 17. 'the balm of hurt minds,' i.e. sleep, *Macbeth*, ii. 2. 30. As explained above, an insult, disguised as a compliment, acts upon the mind as the very reverse of a soporific.

l. 21. **delicately**, ironical. Cf. p. 77, l. 32: and "liberal refinement," below, l. 26. As the king cannot punish those who have insulted him, he will try to forget the insults, since the memory of unavenged insults is painful.

l. 27. **History**, etc. See note on p. 72, l. 16.

l. 30. **the pledged security**, General Lafayette, who was in command of the troops, had undertaken to maintain order about the palace.

P. 79, l. 8. **to say no more of him**, considering him *merely as a king*, we must say that it was wrong to treat him so. When we consider what a good king he was, we must feel for him still more.

l. 11. **the sanctuary**, the security. The word obtained this meaning because it was thought wrong to harm those who took refuge in a church. Cf.

"But, to prevent the tyrant's violence,  
 I'll hence forthwith unto the sanctuary."

—Shakespeare, 3 *Henry VI.* iv. 4. 31;

and

"God in Heaven forbid  
 We should infringe the holy privilege  
 Of blessed sanctuary!"—*Richard III.* iii. 1. 140.

l. 18. **parade**, ostentation; outward show.

l. 25. **abominations**, the word means literally something which we wish to be averted, because we consider it of evil omen. So, generally, it is equivalent to *horrors*.

l. 26. **abused**, lit. put to a wrong use. The female form should be associated only with deeds of gentleness and kindness. In this case evil spirits seemed to have entered into the bodies of women. The furies, properly, were goddesses whose function it was to punish crime by continual persecution of the criminal. Thus the word comes naturally to connote cruelty and violence. They are always represented in the form of hideous hags, with snakes instead of hair upon their heads. Cf. Shakespeare, *Rich. III.* i. 4. 57; *Antony and Cleo.* ii. 5. 40.

l. 27. **the bitterness of death**, a scriptural expression.

l. 31. **one of the old palaces, the Tuileries.** a **bastille for kings**, contrasted with the Bastille for subjects, which had been destroyed by the Parisian mob. Burke implies that it is unfair to retain prisons for kings, whilst abolishing them for subjects. The word *bastille* was used originally to signify any kind of fortress. It is from the French *bastir*, modern *bâtir*, to build.

l. 33. **consecrated at altars**, celebrated in a church. The reference, of course, is to Price's sermon.

l. 35. **divine humanity**, Christ, who is God incarnate.

l. 36. **Theban and Thracian Orgies**, The Greek word *orgion* meant literally a religious rite; but, from its special connection with the worship of Bacchus, the god of wine, it has come to signify a drunken revel. The city of Thebes and the province of Thrace were noted for their special worship of Bacchus.

P. 80, l. 1. **kindle prophetic enthusiasm**, induce to take a hopeful view of the future. The allusion is to Price's forecast of the results of the Revolution, p. 72, l. 7. The word "enthusiasm" is used purposely. It describes properly the state of the priestess of Apollo when under the influence of divine inspiration, and Price is compared to the priestess. See p. 73, l. 32.

l. 2. **but, only.**

l. 3. **a saint and apostle**, used ironically of Dr. Price. If he is a saint and apostle, he must have received some special communications from God; for he certainly does not preach the doctrines of the only inspired book which other men know, viz. the Bible.

l. 5. **superstitions of the heart**, see note on p. 75, l. 29.

l. 7. **the Prince of Peace**, Christ. The title is taken from a passage in one of the Jewish prophets which is applied to Christ: "And his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." **proclaimed**, alluding to the exclamation of Simeon in the temple at Jerusalem. See note on p. 72, l. 8.

l. 9. **the voice of angels**, *St. Luke*, ii. 8, after describing the birth of Christ in Bethlehem, a city in Judæa, says, "And there

were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord ... And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men."

l. 13. *make a delicious repast, etc.*, there are some who look upon them with pleasure.

l. 17. *the Society, the Revolution Society.* The words which follow are, of course, ironical.

l. 19. *Io Pæan*, the shout of triumph. The words literally mean "O healer!" and formed the burden of songs of thanksgiving addressed by the Greeks to Apollo after deliverance from any evil.

l. 26. *Millennium*, lit. a period of a thousand years. Some of the Puritans looked forward to a period of a thousand years during which the power of evil should be destroyed, and the saints should rule the earth. It was called the "fifth monarchy" because it was identified with a dominion which, according to the Jewish prophet Daniel, was to follow upon the destruction of the four monarchies of Assyria, Persia, Macedon, and Rome.

l. 27. *in the destruction, etc.*, this explains what made the event look like a precursor of the millennium. Price's condemnation of established churches has already been mentioned on p. 63, l. 20. The destruction of the French church would be the removal of an evil: and every evil removed was one step gained towards the millennium.

l. 29. *to exercise the patience, etc.* They were impatient for the arrival of the millennium, and were, therefore, in a hurry to murder the King and the bishops.

l. 30. *the long-suffering, the endurance.* Seeing that the King and bishops were not actually murdered, they almost doubted whether the millennium really was coming. For the use of the word worthy cf. 'this poor good man,' p. 73, l. 13.

l. 33. *beautiful day*, see p. 76, l. 34.

l. 35. *A group, etc.* As the King and the bishops were not murdered, the work of the day seemed only half done. So Burke compares it to the outline of a picture, the details of which have not been filled in. *sacrilegious*, because the persons of the bishops, as ministers of God, are sacred.



P. 81, l. 2. **history-piece**, a historical picture.

l. 3. **massacre of innocents**, Herod the ruler of Judæa, was much alarmed when he heard that Christ had been born, and that it was prophesied of him that he would be the ruler of Israel. To secure himself on his throne he conceived the idea of murdering him. The parents of Christ, however, being forewarned escaped into Egypt. Herod had ordered the infant Christ to be brought to him under the pretence of a desire to worship him; but finding that his order was not carried out, and having previously made careful inquiries as to the time of Christ's birth, he sent orders for the massacre of all the children in Bethlehem from two years old and under. This event is commonly known as "*the massacre of the innocents*," an expression which would have been appropriate to describe the murder of the King, the Queen, and their children. **What hardy pencil**, etc. Burke still continues the metaphor of the picture. What upholder of extreme revolutionary principles will be bold enough to complete the work of October 6th by murdering the King, etc. **a great master**, a painter of the first rank. We still talk of 'the great masters' in this sense: and the word 'master-piece' is used for a work of supreme excellence in art.

l. 6. **diffusion of knowledge**, etc., an ironical reference to Price's words, p. 72, l. 10. People still retain an unreasonable aversion to murdering kings.

l. 7. **the king of France**, etc. There is more violence yet to be offered to the King, and more insulting congratulations are to be offered to him. See p. 77, ll. 17 *seqq.*

P. 82, l. 5. **made for accomplishing Revolutions**, are by nature callous. See note on p. 71, l. 22.

l. 7. **not being illuminated**, etc. I have not learnt to despise humanity as a superstition, p. 75, l. 28.

l. 10. **amiable**, cf. p. 40, l. 6.

P. 83, l. 7. **he supported himself**, he did not break down: he remained outwardly composed.

P. 84, l. 1. **it is not unbecoming**, From men in positions of authority we expect great things as a matter of course. It is only when they are placed in exceptionally trying circumstances that we praise their conduct.

l. 8. **insulting adulation**, etc., p. 77, l. 30.

l. 11. **a sovereign**, the Empress Maria Theresa.

l. 15. **she will fall**, etc. She carried poison about with her. Cf. below, l. 27. Burke is thinking of such women as the Roman Lucretia, who killed themselves rather than submit to or survive dishonour.

Pp. 84-94. *The treatment of the French Queen marks a deplorable change in public sentiment and character. The spirit of chivalry has given place to a habit of calculating selfishness. Up till now the glory of the Western world has been that the obedience of subjects, instead of being forced, as in the East, has been a spontaneous tribute of affectionate loyalty. Consequently, kings have had no reason for tyrannizing, nor could the spirit of freedom be extinguished in subjects who only obeyed because they loved. Subordination was maintained without any sense of degradation. Rank commanded respect, and weakness was sure of courteous protection. Service to king and country was rendered without thought of reward. Patriotism kept alive the feeling of honour. Courage was elevated by the cause in which it was exerted. Self-respect and regard for opinion checked the violence of passion, and imposed, at least, an outward delicacy and refinement of manners. The new French philosophy throws contempt upon those artificial sentiments which, by humanizing and refining his natural instincts, have made man more than an animal. Respect for rank and sex is ridiculed. Those moral restraints, which imagination and sentiment create, and which reflection sanctions, are to disappear. Prudence is to be the only check upon the gratification of the passions. The only motives to obedience are to be the prospect of profit and the fear of punishment. But a country must suffer in which selfishness takes the place of patriotism. Rulers, too, who cannot rely on the affections of their subjects, will safeguard themselves by severity. When ideas and principles, rendered sacred by custom, are discarded, it is impossible to forecast men's conduct and destiny. Culture and material prosperity are the distinguishing marks of civilization, and it is to be feared that they will disappear with those sentiments of honour and religion, which are the foundation of the fabric of modern society in Europe. There is reason to fear that the whole world may be infected by the example of France. All right-thinking men, therefore, are interested in the proceedings of that country. No one would endure in a theatre a drama so horrible, and so fraught with lessons of evil, as that which is now being enacted on the political stage in France. Tyrants, it is true, deserve punishment: but they should be punished in a proper manner. The present King of France, however, has been the very reverse of tyrannical. This must have been felt by the revolutionists themselves, or they would have dethroned him. The revolutionists must not expect Englishmen to sympathize with their political crimes. The fate of Lord George Gordon might teach them this.*

l. 18. *the dauphiness*, the wife of the heir apparent to the French throne. It was in the year 1774 that Burke saw her. It was during his stay in Paris in that year that Burke first discovered and was alarmed by the revolutionary and sceptical tone of the conversation of French society. This passage has often been ridiculed as displaying an exaggerated affectation of sensibility: but Burke declared in a letter to Sir Philip Francis that he could never think without weeping of the contrast between the appearance of Marie Antoinette in 1774 and her fate on October 6th.

l. 20. *delightful vision*, cf.

"She was a phantom of delight  
When first she gleamed upon my sight."

—Wordsworth.

She seemed to Burke like an angel descended from a higher sphere. Just above the horizon, *i.e.* soon after her appearance in France. She was like a star that had just risen on France.

l. 23. *what an heart*, etc., how void of feeling must I be. See note on p. 17, l. 20.

l. 25. *titles of veneration*, viz. as Queen of France.

l. 27. *the sharp antidote*, See note on p. 84, l. 15.

l. 30. *a nation of cavaliers*, a chivalrous nation. The words cavalier, chivalry, and chivalrous, come through the French *cheval* from the Latin *caballus*, a horse. Cavalier means properly a horseman: and as knights served on horseback, chivalry is used to signify the spirit of knighthood. According to Hallam, valour, loyalty, courtesy, munificence, and justice constituted the ideal of chivalrous character. Even as early as the days of Charlemagne certain feudal tenants were bound to serve their lords mounted and in armour. Their superior equipment increased their courage, and they were noted for their valour and their ambition of personal distinction. In later days it was the custom for young men of rank to enrol themselves under the banner of some distinguished soldier. To him they were bound by the tie of personal attachment, and their ambition was to distinguish themselves. Thus it is easy to see how valour, loyalty, and the feeling of honour entered into the ideal of knightly perfection. The crusades gave to the institution of knighthood a religious tinge. Lastly, the advance of civilization associated with the other duties of knighthood those of courtesy and protection to women. In these ways chivalry no doubt aided the progress of civilization. On the other hand, it emphasized social distinctions, and so perpetuated the degradation of the lower orders: it inflamed the passion for military glory: and it permitted and encouraged lax relations between the two sexes.

l. 34. *sophisters*, See note on p. 28, l. 20. In the pages

which follow Burke explains that in their reasonings they failed to appreciate the moral value of the feelings. An instance of sophistry is the identification of regicide and parricide with common homicide: p. 86, l. 12. *economists*, lit. men who are careful in their expenditure. In old days men did not expect to be paid for their services to king and country. Henceforth to do a service without receiving a reward will seem like extravagance. In all that they do men will *calculate* whether what they get is worth what they give. On p. 86, l. 22, he says that there will be no disinterested patriotism. Men will only support the laws in so far as, by so doing, they will further their own ends. They will not sacrifice their private interests to those of the state.

l. 35. *the glory of Europe*, See p. 85, l. 17.

P. 85, l. 1. *generous*, See note on p. 39, l. 34. Burke means that there is nothing *servile* in an obedience and a respect which are accorded willingly. So on p. 85, l. 33, he talks of a '*liberal*, i.e. not servile, obedience.' The words *proud* and *dignified* also signify that a man cannot feel any sense of degradation in willingly obeying another because he loves him.

l. 2. *subordination of the heart, loving obedience*. A long course of oppressions enforced by mere terrorism stamps out the very thought of resistance, and renders men unfit to be anything but slaves. But nothing can diminish the self-respect and independence of those who submit to oppression, not because they are afraid to resist, but because they love their oppressors too much to think of resisting them. The meaning is explained on p. 40, l. 1. 'You were not enslaved through any illiberal or servile disposition.'

l. 4. *grace of life*, On p. 86, l. 2, Burke argues that sentiment veils the hideousness of human passion: and on p. 86, l. 21, he argues that a contempt for sentiment shows a want of refinement. The comeliness which feeling gives to the character of men and to their mutual relations is *unbought*, in the sense that feeling is spontaneous.

l. 5. *the cheap defence*, the safety of the country is secured by the disinterested patriotism of the citizens. The words *unbought* and *cheap* emphasize the folly of the French in throwing away what not only cost them nothing, but even saved them something. *manly*, used in the same sense as on p. 7, l. 27.

l. 7. *principle*, see note on p. 70, l. 18. Men had a delicate sense of honour. They shrank from wrong-doing as a man shrinks from bodily pain. *chastity of honour*, a strong expression. They guarded their honour as a woman guards her virtue.

l. 8. *it mitigated ferocity*, Their courage sprang from sympathy with distress, from loyalty, or from a sense of wounded honour.

l. 10. by losing all its grossness, cf. "The sentiments of honour and gallantry have introduced a refinement of pleasure, a regard for decency, and a respect for the public opinion into the modern courts of Europe."—*Gibbon*, ch. 6.

l. 13. varied in its appearance, as circumstances change, the duties of chivalry change too. In these peaceful times it is not necessary for knights to ride abroad rescuing distressed women. But women still need courteous treatment.

l. 15. influenced, used intransitively : exercised an influence.

l. 23. without confounding ranks, Burke means that under the feudal system the necessary gradations of rank were secured because the higher and the lower orders were bound to one another by mutual needs and mutual services. Vassals, for instance, though obeying their feudal lord, could yet feel that in a certain sense they were on a level with him. They were as necessary to him as he was to them.

l. 28. soft collar, etc., the gentle restraint of public opinion.

l. 32. illusions, the term is used because it was imagination and sentiment that invested persons in authority with the qualities to which we pay respect.

l. 33. liberal, see note on p. 85, l. 1.

l. 34. bland assimilation, digestion. The loyalty of a subject to his sovereign is analogous to the affection of a son for his father.

P. 86, l. 1. Light and reason, on p. 97, l. 6, Burke shows how much greater is the influence of feeling upon conduct than that of mere reasoning can be. decent drapery, our morality is to the passions what clothes are to the body. Mr. Wallace remarks upon the criticism which was applied in the eighteenth century to Art, Religion, Morality, and the several forms of human society. The reflective principle may at any time come forward and ask what right they have to exist. "What is the Family, it is said, but a fiction or convention, which is used to give a decent, but somewhat transparent covering to a certain animal appetite, and its probable consequences? What is the State, and what is Society, but a fiction or compact, by which the weak try to make themselves seem strong, and the unjust seek to shelter themselves from the consequences of their own injustice? What is Religion, it is said, but a delusion springing from the fears and weakness of the crowd, and the cunning of the few, which men have fostered until it has wrapped humanity in its snaky coils. And Poetry, we are assured, like its sister Arts, will perish and its illusions fade away, when Science, now in the cradle, has become the full-grown Hercules. As for Morality and Law, and the like, the same condemnation has been prepared from of old. All of them, it is said, are but the inventions of power and craft,

or the phantoms of human imagination, which the strength of positive science and bare facts is destined in no long time to dispel."—*Logic of Hegel, Introd.* ch. v. Mr. Caird also notices "the strange contradiction which we find in the literature of the eighteenth century, which with one hand exalts the individual almost to a god, while with the other hand it seems to strip off the last veil that hides from him that he is a beast."—Caird's *Hegel*, p. 19. The explanation of the paradox is that the man, for whom freedom was claimed as a right, was the merely natural man, *i.e.* man conceived of as in isolation, and unformed and unmodified by social relations.

l. 4. *the heart owns*, etc., Burke has been arguing throughout that these ideas are *natural*, and that reflection proves the value of them. Those who would eradicate them have either *cold hearts* (*i.e.* are devoid of natural feeling) or *muddy understandings* (*i.e.* are too stupid to appreciate the value of those moral ideas which are the offspring of human feeling), p. 86, l. 20.

l. 6. *exploded*, see note on p. 28, l. 24.

l. 7. The word *fashion* is suggested by the metaphor of the clothes.

l. 12. *romance, fancy*. See note on p. 39, l. 35.

l. 14. *destroying its simplicity*, viz. by an unnecessary multiplication of offences.

l. 25. *In the groves*, etc., in their doctrines the ultimate argument is always an appeal to men's fears. The academy was originally the garden in which Plato taught: so it has come to mean generally a school.

l. 26. *visto*, a view; we use the form *vista*.

l. 29. *mechanic*, so called because it leaves no room for the spontaneous play of human feeling. We should say *mechanical*.

l. 31. *that sort*, etc., see note on p. 71, l. 24.

l. 34. *as supplements*, there are of course many duties which the law does not enforce. *as correctives*, cases must arise where the strict enforcement of the law would inflict hardships. In such cases right feeling will prevent men from pressing the law. Aristotle defines an equitable man as one "who refrains from pushing his legal rights to the extreme, to the injury of others, and who forgoes the advantage of his position though the law may be in his favour."

l. 35. *always as aids*, a law must remain a dead letter if the people are not sufficiently public-spirited to assist in the enforcement of it. *a wise man*, the Roman poet Horace. The line is taken from his *Letter on the Art of Poetry*. Cf. "Government is like everything else: if it is to be preserved, it must be loved."—Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois*, bk. iv. ch. 5.

P. 87, l. 14, *Fealty*, fidelity. The word is specially used in connection with the vow of faithful service made by a vassal to his lord.

l. 19. *not standing*, etc., *i.e.* when king and subjects do not trust one another. ●

l. 30. *cannot be indifferent*, *i.e.* they must produce some considerable effect one way or another. ●

l. 33. *but too apt*, more inclined than we ought to be. The word *too* as distinguished from *very* signifies excess: and *but* (= *only*) shows that the excess is to be regretted. Cf. p. 89, l. 22, "but too close a concern."

P. 88, l. 4. *spirit of a gentleman*, *i.e.* the spirit of honour. It is difficult to define the English word 'gentleman.' The word connotes an aversion from anything which is dishonourable either in thought or action. Hallam says that a predominant impulse has been given to the moral sentiments and energies of mankind by three spirits—those of liberty, religion, and honour.

l. 17. *swinish*, *i.e.* not above the level of the grossest animal.

l. 19. *letters*, literature.

l. 21. *full as much*, Burke implies that we value them more than they deserve.

l. 23. *economical politicians*, cf. "economists and calculators," p. 84, l. 34. Refinement may compensate for poverty. But where there is ignorance as well as poverty, there is barbarism.

P. 89, l. 3. *manly pride*, self-respect. The term *manly* is always a term of commendation. Cf. p. 7, l. 27. The pride which keeps a man from lowering himself by telling a lie is a *manly pride*. The pride of wealth is not.

l. 7. *disgustful*, we use the form *disgusting*. Literally the word signifies 'distasteful.'

l. 13. *It is not clear*, Hallam calls France "the fountain of chivalry."

l. 17. *the cradle*, a reminiscence of a phrase in Virgil's *Æneid*, 3, 105.

l. 22. *but too close*, see note on p. 87, l. 33.

l. 27. *a revolution*, cf. p. 77, l. 25.

l. 36. *it is natural*, see note on p. 82, l. 7.

P. 90, l. 11. *been observed*, Burke interprets a passage in Aristotle's *Poetica* to mean that it is the business of tragedy to excite feelings of horror and pity by representing the connection between wrong-doing and misfortune. Thus our feelings are purified, because we are taught to hate wrong-doing, and to feel for the misery which it produces.

l. 13. **the dispensations, etc.**, God's mode of dealing with men. The old and the new dispensation respectively are terms commonly applied to the divine government of the world as revealed in the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures.

l. 16. **theatric**, we should say **theatrical**. Cf. **mechanic**, p. 86, l. 29.

ll. 19, 20. **Garrick and Siddons**, a famous actor and actress. Garrick and Burke were friends.

l. 24. **thus**, as in Dr. Price's sermon.

l. 27. **the moral constitution, etc.**, man's natural feelings as to right and wrong. Only those who have adopted the theory that kingship is an invasion of the rights of men can look with satisfaction upon cruelty to kings, p. 86, l. 12.

l. 30. **Machiavelian**, cf. p. 11, l. 4.

l. 35. **a personated tyrant**, a tyrant who was one of the characters in a play. *Persona* is the Latin word for the mask in which an actor played. Mr. Payne says that Burke is alluding to the 'hypothetical proposition' put by the Greek dramatist Euripides into the mouth of Eteocles—"If injustice is permissible, it is most honourable when done to gain power." Burke's memory is at fault. The lines which were condemned occurred in a speech of Bellerophon—"If there be anything in the look of Venus so sweet (as the look of money), it is no wonder that thousands fall in love with her."

P. 91, l. 2. **a principal actor**, viz. Dr. Price.

l. 4. **contingent, hypothetical**. He has no horror of crime as such. He regards it as justifiable when it is likely to be profitable.

l. 7. **a ledger**, an account book.

l. 8. **the book-keepers, etc.**, those who set the crimes of one government against those of another, as a tradesman balances his receipts and his expenditure. It is no excuse for the crimes of one government that they are less than those of another.

l. 10. **intuitive, immediate**. It is derived from a Latin word meaning 'to look at.' In philosophical language it is applied to axioms, the truth of which we perceive *at a glance*.

l. 15. **parsimony**, if a crime was not committed, it was due to accident, not to any desire on the part of the conspirators to be niggardly in wrong-doing. For the metaphor, cf. "this prodigal and wild waste of public evils," p. 43, l. 18.

l. 18. **a shorter cut**, for the metaphor, cf. "With these dispensations from the laws of charity and integrity, the pressing of a man's fortune may be more hasty and compendious. But it is in life as it is in ways, the shortest way is commonly the



foulest, and surely the fairer way is not much about."—Bacon, *Adv.* ii. 23. 45.

l. 22. fear, cf. p. 43, l. 31.

l. 27. truly, forsooth. It is ironical. Dr. Price justifies the triumph on the ridiculous ground that, etc.

l. 31. a long acquiescence, Notice Burke's respect for prescriptive rights. Cf. p. 169, l. 23.

l. 36. concessions, See p. 42, l. 19.

P. 92, l. 2. to call, etc., referring to the Assembly of the Notables in 1787.

l. 11. I tremble, etc., See note on p. 41, l. 34: and cp. p. 87, l. 20.

l. 15. complacent, satisfied.

l. 16. know to, know how to. Such men are like servants. They are contented to obey a stern master: but they look upon indulgence as weakness, and take advantage of it.

l. 18. awakened vigilance, for the metaphor, cf. 'to lull authority asleep,' p. 42, l. 12.

l. 21. listed, enlisted. They stick to the successful. For the meaning of principle, see on p. 70, l. 18.

l. 31. with truth been said, Mr. Payne points out that the reference is to Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, 1268,

"O, how comely it is, and how reviving  
To the spirits of just men long oppressed,  
When God into the hands of their deliverer  
Puts invincible might,  
To quell the mighty of the earth, the oppressor,  
The brute and boisterous force of violent men," etc.

l. 36. Nero, Emperor of Rome, A.D. 54-68. The cruelty of his reign is notorious. Agrippina was the mother of Nero. Louis the Eleventh, 1461-1483, by destroying the power of the nobles, laid the foundation of absolute monarchy in France.

P. 93, l. 1. Charles the Ninth directed and took part in the massacre of the Protestants on St. Bartholomew's Day, August 24, 1572.

l. 2. Patkul was by birth a Livonian. In 1689 he with others presented a petition of grievances to Charles XI. This act was regarded as treasonable. He was condemned to death but escaped into Russia. Subsequently Charles XII. refused to make peace with Augustus of Poland unless Patkul was delivered up to him, and he was seized and put to death in 1707.

l. 3. Christina, during her stay in Paris in 1656, caused Monaldeschi, a former favourite, to be put to death in revenge for his betrayal of her secrets.

1. 6. **the French King**, the title 'King of the French' was substituted for 'French King' after August 4th. He was henceforth to be the ruler of the inhabitants of France, but not, as in former times, the lord of the territory of France.

1. 117 **subordinate executory trust**, he cannot be trusted to carry out the orders of the Assembly, which is his master. See pp. 223-231. A tyrant degraded to the rank of a servant, instead of serving faithfully those who have degraded him, will always be on the watch for a chance of recovering his power over them.

1. 26. **generous enemies**, explained on p. 74, l. 19.

1. 29. **with the attestation**, etc., lit. supported by the *fleur-de-lis* or lily, which is the royal badge of France: i.e. scandalous stories about the Queen of France. Lord George Gordon (1751-1793) took a large part in organizing, and afterwards became president of the Protestant Association of England and Scotland, which was formed to resist the passing of the acts for the removal of Catholic disabilities. On 2nd June, 1780, he headed the mob which went in procession to the Houses of Parliament to present a petition against the acts. During several days the mob was guilty of the greatest violence. It destroyed Catholic churches, robbed the houses of Catholics, set fire to Newgate, broke open all the other prisons, and attacked the Bank of England and other public buildings. Gordon, for his share in instigating these riots, was accused of high treason. He was acquitted on the ground that he had no treasonable intentions. In 1787 he was convicted of libelling the Queen of France, the French ambassador, and the administration of justice in England. But he was allowed to withdraw from the court without bail, and escaped to Holland. He was, however, commanded to quit that country at the instance of the French Court. He returned to England, was apprehended, and in January, 1788, was sentenced to five years' imprisonment in Newgate. At the conclusion of his term of imprisonment he refused to give the guarantee required as a condition of his obtaining his liberty, and he died in prison in 1793. He had become a convert to Judaism shortly before he was apprehended.

1. 30. **For Newgate**, see p. 78, l. 3.

1. 31. **his being**, etc. Burke often hints that financial necessities had driven the government to court the favour of the Jewish money-lenders. They looked to them, for example, to buy or to advance money on the security of the confiscated lands of the church. Cf. "Your new Hebrew brethren," p. 94, l. 7, and see note on p. 117, l. 8.

1. 32. **his zeal**, etc. Burke says again on p. 96, l. 23, that the

English have no sympathy with the hostility of the French to priests.

1. 33. **excuse the term**, mob is a term contemptuously applied to a collection of the lower orders. For the term **mob** the French would substitute *the sovereign people*.

1. 35. **a liberty**, notice that Burke takes every opportunity of defining political terms which are likely to be abused. Cf. p. 3, l. 16.

P. 94, l. 1. **We have prisons**, etc. This is another point of difference between England and France. The English do not regard prisons as inconsistent with liberty. The French inaugurated the era of liberty by destroying the great prison in Paris. Cf. p. 79, l. 31.

1. 3. **spiritual retreat**, properly a place to which a man retires for religious meditation. Burke hopes that Gordon will come out of prison a better man. **libeller**, referring to the libel on the Queen of France, of which he was convicted.

1. 4. **Thalmud**, a book containing the civil and canonical laws of the Jews. It bears about the same relation to the law of Moses that modern manuals like the *Dharma Sindhu* bear to the old *Sutras*.

1. 7. **new Hebrew brethren**, see note on p. 93, l. 31.

1. 11. **the thirty pieces of silver**, Judas, one of the disciples of Christ, took thirty pieces of silver from the Jewish priests to betray his Master to them; but he afterwards, in a fit of remorse, returned the money. Burke says that it has been accumulating in the hands of the priests ever since, and that a part of the interest (lit. a fraction of each pound of interest) will be devoted to purchasing the church lands. The *synagogue* (lit. assembly) means the Jewish church. The meaning is that the sale of the church property appears more hateful when we consider the disgraceful origin of the fund with which it is purchased. **Dr. Price** has shewn us, referring to his economical and financial treatises. See note on p. 11, l. 7.

1. 13. **are lately discovered**, Burke often insists that prescription alone had given to the church the right of ownership.

1. 14. **Send us**, etc. England will welcome those whom France detests, and will be glad to be rid of those whom France will welcome. On p. 167, Burke argues that Englishmen have no sympathy with attacks on Catholics, as such.

1. 15. **our protestant Rabbim**, Gordon, the English convert to Judaism. *Rabbim* is used loosely for a learned Jew. It means properly a master or teacher.

1. 17. **but pray**, etc., don't rob him, before he starts, of the money which he uses so well. On pp. 182-3 Burke insists on the

good use which the church made of its property as an argument against the confiscation.

1. 21. the poor-box, money devoted to charity.

Pp. 94-102. *The clamour of a few busy-bodies, eager for notoriety, must not be mistaken for the voice of the English people. Englishmen are too conservative to exchange their old principles in morality, religion, and politics, for the new doctrines of the French philosophers. No sophistry can beguile them into abandoning their natural respect for authority. They will not degrade themselves to the level of beasts by identifying freedom with license. They cling to inherited prejudices, partly from distrust of their own wisdom as compared with the experience of ages, partly because prejudices influence men's actions for good more surely and more systematically than naked reason can. The French leaders, on the other hand, despise experience, and have an overweening confidence in their own ability. They care nothing for the stability of institutions. Their patriotism is mere selfishness. Englishmen would shun the principles and practices of the French revolutionists like a plague. French policy has been largely dictated by men who are hostile to Christianity, even if they are not downright atheists. In England sceptical writers find no readers. No party of sceptics has ever existed in England. The spirit of religion presided over the construction, as it has presided over all reforms of the British constitution. Nothing can root out an Englishman's reverence for religion. He prefers superstition to atheism. He reverences his established Protestant church. He guards it, as he guards all his institutions, because he knows not what evil might follow the destruction of them. He is suspicious of all criticism of them. For the benefit of the French, if they have the wisdom to profit by it, Burke proposes to give a description of the English constitution.* //

1. 24. Old Jewry and London Tavern, see p. 11, l. 8, and p. 73, l. 31.

1. 25. I have no man's proxy, no man has authorized me to speak for him. Cf. p. 3, l. 11. Proxy is a shortened form of procuracy : Lat. *procurare*, to manage.

1. 32. descriptions, kinds. Cf. p. 38, l. 25.

P. 95, l. 9. consequence, importance. puffing, praising. The people of England consists of the thousands who live happily and quietly under the English constitution. D'Alembert quoted in his Introduction to the third volume of the *Encyclopædia* the fable of Bocalina :—"A traveller was disturbed by the importunate chirrupings of the grasshoppers ; he would fain have slain them

everyone, but only got belated and missed his way ; he need only have fared peacefully on his road, and the grasshoppers would have died of themselves before the end of a week."

l. 27. a king, John the Good, after the battle of Poitiers in 1356.

l. 32. Thanks, etc., the very mention of a change provokes us : we are a people hard to move. Cf. "We are supposed a dull sluggish race," p. 60, l. 32.

l. 36. subtilized ourselves into savages, We have not adopted the philosophy of Rousseau, which exalts the state of nature above the state of society.

P. 96, l. 2. not the disciples of Voltaire, we have not rejected Christianity. Helvetius, we have not exchanged the old belief that morality is God's law for the belief that it is nothing but enlightened self-interest. The opinions of Helvetius, Voltaire, and Rousseau are described in the Introduction.

l. 4, we have made no discoveries, In Burke's eyes morality and order were so important that he looked with horror upon anything which could tend to shake men's moral and political convictions, or to cast a doubt upon the validity of existing rules and institutions. Only use and association can give any real power to systems and beliefs. Cf. p. 98.

l. 10. pert, forward, impudent.

l. 12. entrails, feelings. Cf. the following passage from the Bible, "Whoso seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" 1 John, iii. 17. The Greek word for bowels was used metaphorically, like our word *heart*, for the feelings or affections.

l. 14. the active monitors, they are always busy : they never cease to warn us of our duty. See note on p. 71, l. 22.

l. 15. manly, cf. p. 7, l. 27. To draw means to remove the inside of a bird : and to truss means to pin the wings to the sides with skewers. We have not abandoned our natural feelings of respect and reverence on the ground that, all being equal, no man owes respect to another. A man 'embowelled' of his entrails' is naturally compared to a stuffed bird.

l. 17. blurred, scribbled over.

l. 19. unsophisticated, not perverted. See note on p. 28,

l. 20. I have explained on p. 40, l. 30, how absurd and pedantic it is to insist on the literal equality of men.

l. 20. hearts of flesh and blood, human feelings and sympathies.

l. 25. natural, cf. p. 57, l. 5.

1. 28. **rational liberty**, cf. p. 3, l. 16. The doctrine of equality must, if acted on, mean license to every one to do what he pleases.

P. 97, l. 4. **enlightened**, ironical.

1. 10. **We are afraid**, etc., cf. p. 67, l. 25.

1. 14. **capital**, the accumulated wisdom. See note on p. 39, l. 15.

1. 15. **exploding**, See note on p. 28, l. 24.

1. 20. **the naked reason**, see note on p. 86, l. 1. A man who hates lying, though he can give no reason for his hatred, is more likely to tell the truth regularly than a man who, though he can see the reasonableness of truth speaking, has yet no aversion from lying.

1. 23. **is of ready application**, men do instinctively what they have been accustomed to do.

1. 31. **the enlightened**, ironical: those who pride themselves on substituting reason for prejudice.

1. 32. **They have no respect**, etc., cp. p. 41, l. 6, and p. 106, l. 25.

1. 33. **they pay it off**, they make up for their want of respect.

P. 98 l. 1. **a building**, for the metaphor cp. p. 38, l. 19, and p. 106, l. 10.

1. 3. **place all their hopes in discovery**, See note on p. 96, l. 4. Those whom Burke is criticizing think that, as the world grows older, it grows wiser, and that therefore each generation can improve upon the institutions and beliefs of that which preceded. Perpetuity, therefore, is mischievous, because it means a continuance of what is imperfect. Burke, on the other hand, maintains that institutions under which men are tolerably happy, and beliefs which keep men in the path of duty are better, even though they contain an element of unreason, than any institutions and beliefs which, just because they are new, will not influence men at all. Cf. p. 87, l. 23. It is one of Mackintosh's criticisms upon Burke that he interprets experience to mean what our forefathers have discovered, to the exclusion of any discoveries that we ourselves may make. Burke, of course, is quite right in maintaining that man is what his history has made him, and that it is only within very narrow limits that legislation can mould him. At the same time it was inevitable that a system, so unreasonable as that of France, should be brought to the test of reason, and that an attempt should be made to turn reason and science to account for the reconstruction of the social order, and the amelioration of the lot of man. Confidence in the possibility of this reconstruction

and amelioration is one of the most marked characteristics of France in the eighteenth century.

l. 5. at *inexpiable war*, a phrase borrowed from the Roman historian Livy, iv. 35. Cf. p. 157, l. 8. It means a war in which the combatants will make no terms with each other.

l. 9. *present conveniency*, cf. p. 86, l. 23.

l. 16. *it begins and ends, etc.*, cf. p. 70, l. 27.

l. 31. *their intrigues*, cf. p. 7, l. 21.

l. 32. *by a confidence*, cf. p. 5, l. 17.

l. 36. *the event, the result*. Cf. p. 13, l. 26.

P. 99, l. 7. *the anathema*, cf. p. 14, l. 18. *the crusade*, the Pope could proclaim a holy war against any sovereign who resisted his decrees.

l. 8. *the lamp-iron*, cf. p. 57, l. 10.

l. 15. *panacea*, a Greek word signifying a universal remedy.

l. 16. *We know the consequences, etc.*, cf. p. 69, l. 19.

l. 19. *quarantine*, we should take the greatest care to keep it out of the kingdom. Quarantine is from the Fr. *quarante*, Lat. *quadraginta*, forty. It denotes the period (originally of forty days) during which a ship with cases of infectious disease on board is prevented from communicating with the land.

l. 20. *philosophic*, the word implies hostility to Christianity.

l. 26. *blunt, homely*, straightforward and simple. In one of his speeches in Parliament, made soon after his return from France, Burke said—"The most horrid and cruel blow that can be offered to civil society is through atheism. The infidels are outlaws of the constitution, not of this country, but of the human race. They are never, never to be supported, never to be tolerated. Under the systematic attacks of these people, I see some of the props of good government already begin to fail; I see propagated principles which will not leave to religion even a toleration. I see myself sinking every day under the attacks of these wretched people."

l. 31. *Collins, etc.*, names of well-known deists of the eighteenth century.

l. 33. *Bolingbroke*, cf. p. 140, l. 21. Burke is thinking here of Bolingbroke's deistical writings and his attacks on revealed religion. Burke had been a student of Bolingbroke. His *Vindication of Natural Society* is a satire upon Bolingbroke's views; and, as Mr. Morley points out, his *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* is really a refutation of Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*, which had advocated government by a strong and impartial monarch. Bolingbroke, Henry St. John, Viscount, was born in 1678. He entered Parliament in 1701 as a Tory, and soon became by his

oratorical and debating powers one of the most conspicuous members of the party. During the campaign against the French he was Secretary at War. In 1708 he retired together with Harley and devoted two years to study. On Harley's return to office Bolingbroke was made Secretary of State. On the death of Anne he was dismissed from office, and shortly afterwards was ordered to appear on a charge of high treason, for the part which he had played, while Secretary at War, in negotiating a separate treaty with France. Before the impeachment he had fled in disguise to France : and, as he did not appear for trial, his name was struck off the list of peers and he was declared banished. He then entered the service of the Pretender, but was, after some time, dismissed. As public life was now closed to him, he gave himself up to philosophical study. In 1723 he obtained permission to reside again in England. By writing political pamphlets he assisted the party which was endeavouring to oust Walpole from office. But in 1735, his intrigues were discovered and made public by Walpole, and as his friends did not care openly to defend a man of his reputation, he was obliged once more to fly to France. In 1743 he again returned to England, and remained there until his death in 1751.

l. 36. *their few successors*, The allusion is supposed to be to the philosopher Hume. *the family vault*, they will be buried in oblivion like those who in former days held the same views. The allusion is to *Romeo and Juliet*, act iv. sc. 1,

"Thou shalt be borne to that same ancient vault,  
Where all the kindred of the Capulets lie."

P. 100, l. 3. *were not gregarious*, Mr. Payne points out that Burke is thinking of Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, 293,

"If any be (atheists) they walk obscure ;  
For of such doctrine never was there school,  
But the heart of the fool,  
And no man therein doctor but himself."

l. 5. *to influence*, etc., *to exercise any influence on*.

l. 13. *auspices*, Religion has regulated politics : nothing has been done without reference to it. See note on p. 35, l. 35. *the sanctions*, a sanction is what gives to anything its authority. For instance, the sanction of a law is the penalty by which it is enforced. The state in England has been regarded as a divine institution, and has been respected accordingly.

P. 101, l. 2. *an enemy*, viz. atheism.

l. 8. *It will be perfumed*, etc., we will not be contaminated by the spurious philosophy which, in an underhand way, is introduced amongst us.



l. 10. A **smuggler**, literally, is a person engaged in contra-band trade. Cf. p. 28, l. 4.

l. 11. it is not **avarice**, we shall not trust dishonest men with the examination and management of the property of the church.

l. 15. **since heats** are subsided, since the angry passions of the Reformation period have died away.

l. 20. it is our **pride to know**, because it raises us in the scale of creation. Cf. "Which has hitherto been our boast," l. 27.

l. 23. **in a drunken delirium**, etc., misled by the evil examples of France. A man cheated out of the truth is compared to a man who has lost his senses under the influence of intoxicating liquor.

l. 24. **the alembic**, the distilling vessel.

l. 26. **uncover our nakedness**, for the metaphor cf. "the decent drapery of life," p. 86, l. 1.

l. 28. **source of civilisation**, The church kept alive the taste for literature and study in the dark ages, and in periods of violence and barbarism it acted as a check upon the civil power, and supplied and enforced a moral code.

l. 31. **take place**, we should say 'take *the* place of it.'

l. 33. **human means of estimation**, viz. wealth and position. Cf. pp. 114-6.

P. 102, l. 4. **have made a philosophy**, etc., are opposed to them systematically and on principle. Cf. p. 98, l. 4.

l. 8. **in the degree it exists**, Burke would hardly recognize the England of to-day. The sovereign would not now insist on the right to appoint or maintain in office unpopular ministers. The House of Lords hesitates to put itself in opposition to the will of the people. The suffrage has been made almost universal: and the disestablishment of the church is a measure openly advocated by numbers.

l. 11. **the misfortune**, see note on p. 96, l. 4, and p. 98, l. 3.

l. 15. **if any such**, etc., Burke implies that there are none. He frequently taunts the French with their contempt for experience.

l. 16. **of**, we should say *by*.

l. 19. **in ancient Rome**, In the year 450 B.C. three commissioners went from Rome to travel into Greece, and bring back a copy of the laws of Solon, and the laws and institution of any other Greek city that might seem good and useful.

Pp. 102-116. *The English are wisely prejudiced in favour of their Established Church. They commend the instinct which has led men uniformly to consecrate the states which they have*

formed. This consecration protects the state from violence, and inspires those who rule it with a high sense of their duties towards it. Religion exalts men, because it connects them with God: and rulers, least of all, can afford to neglect anything which will make them more perfect. Especially is religion necessary in a democracy. The power of the people is greater than that of a monarch, and they are less subject to be controlled either by force or opinion. Only religion can keep them in mind of their responsibilities to their fellow-men and to God. When the state and the laws are invested with a sacred character, men will be sensible of the duty to bequeath them intact to their successors. They will be afraid to change, much more to destroy them. Thus the continuity of social life is preserved, and without such continuity civilization is impossible. It is true that society is a partnership, but it is a partnership ordained by God for the perfecting of man. It would necessarily fail of its object if it could be dissolved at will. Humanity is one great society. The members of it are different in each generation: but the society is one and indissoluble. Each separate state is related to this whole as particular corporations are related to the kingdom in which they exist. Nor is any state free to destroy its corporate existence: since by so doing it would set itself in opposition to the divine will. Revolution is justifiable only when it is necessary to preserve the state: and this shows that the maintenance of the state is the supreme end. A deliberate preference of anarchy to social order is an unreasonable preference of misery and vice. Conscious that human perfection can only be realized in the state, and that the state is a blessing which they owe to God, Englishmen have bound their church and state indissolubly together, and have devoted a portion of their revenue to the proper maintenance of divine worship. Further, the chosen companions and instructors of English youths are still, as in old days, clergymen: and that this system of education is successful is proved by the intellectual achievements of England. That their church may exist in a position of independence and dignity, without being a danger to the state, Englishmen have endowed it with property of its own. So sincere is their attachment to religion, that they have taken care to make permanent provision for communicating both its lessons and its comforts to all classes of the community. They are needed by the great as well as by the lowly: and the officers of the church are placed in a position of dignity and wealth, equal to that of the greatest of the land, that they may be regarded as equals, and treated with respect, by those whom

*it is their business to instruct. It is felt that churchmen will employ their wealth quite as well as laymen : and their voluntary charities are better than any relief administered to those in want by mere agents of the state.*

1. 34. **officiate**, **hold office**. The word is used because he has compared the state to a church, and a priest performing a service in a church is said to *officiate*.

P. 103, l. 3. **full of immortality**, the good that they do lives after them.

1. 12. **politic**, **political**. Cf. p. 86, l. 29.

1. 13. **rational and natural**, because religion is proved both by reflection and instinct. Cf. p. 101, l. 22. With the passage as a whole cf. "They that deny a God destroy man's nobility ; for certainly man is of kin to the beasts by his body ; and, if he be not of kin to God by his spirit, he is a base and ignoble creature. It destroys likewise magnanimity, and the raising of human nature ; for take an example of a dog, and mark what a generosity and courage he will put on when he finds himself maintained by a man : who to him is instead of a God or higher nature ; which courage is manifestly such as that creature, without that confidence of a better nature than his own, could never attain. So man, when he resteth and assureth himself upon divine protection and favour, gathereth a force and faith which human nature in itself could not obtain. Therefore, as atheism is in all respects hateful, so in this, that it depriveth human nature of the means to exalt itself above human frailty."—Bacon, *Essay XVI*.

1. 16. **prerogative**, **exclusive privilege**. See p. 26, l. 35.

1. 18. **no trivial place**, *i.e.* a very high place.

1. 24. **awe**, the word properly signifies religious fear. From Burke's present point of view political crime is sacrilege.

1. 26. **determinate**, **definite**.

1. 30. **are confined**, *etc.*, *i.e.* have no political power.

1. 34. **the one great master**, *viz.* God.

P. 104, l. 1. **the collective sovereign**, *i.e.* when the government is democratic. Montesquieu points out that a republic cannot exist without an unselfish devotion on the part of each citizen to the interest of the whole.

1. 3. **Whoever uses**, *etc.*, agents may be unfaithful to their employers.

1. 7. **covered**, **justified** ; **protected**.

1. 11. **Janissaries**, a Turkish corps established in 1326. Like the prætorian guards at Rome, they were intended as a safeguard to their sovereign : but like them they became a danger both to the sovereign and the state.

l. 12. **Thus we have seen,** When the people of Paris broke out into revolt on the dismissal of Necker, July 11th, 1789, the French guards went over in a body to the side of the people. Upon this passage Sir James Mackintosh says—"Burke's insinuation that the conduct of the soldiers was due to a promise of larger pay is absurd. No largesses could have seduced, no intrigues could have reached, so vast and divided a body. Nothing but sympathy with the national spirit could have produced their noble disobedience. It was all over France that the troops simultaneously refused to act against their fellow-citizens. Besides, the increase of pay to the soldiers had been prescribed to the Assembly by their constituents before the Assembly met. It was a national policy, not one originating with the Assembly. This is one illustration of what we ought never to forget, that in the French Revolution all is to be attributed to general causes influencing the whole body of the people, and almost nothing to the schemes and ascendant of individuals."

l. 17. **nearer to their objects,** no agent, who may be untrustworthy, comes between them and the execution of their wishes. Mr. Bryce was led to similar reflections by his study of American democracy. "It is an old saying that monarchies live by honour and republics by virtue. The more democratic republics become, the more the masses grow conscious of their own power, the more do they need to live, not only by patriotism, but by reverence and self-control, and the more essential to their well-being are those sources whence reverence and self-control flow." *The American Commonwealth*, pt. vi. ch. ciii.

l. 25. **A perfect democracy, etc.,** Burke is thinking of the small city-states of Greece. Cf. p. 139, l. 16. Burke was much influenced by Aristotle, and Aristotle, in his criticism of democracy, was evidently thinking of Athens, where everything tended to put power into the hands of the mob, and where, consequently, everything was decided on the impulse of the hour. Cf. the account of democracy in the eighth book of Plato's *Republic*.

P. 105, l. 3. **with safety to themselves,** Burke, for instance, was convinced that, if England had been successful in her contest with the American colonies, the victory would have been fatal to the liberties of Englishmen. "In order to prove," he says, "that the Americans have no right to their liberties we are every day endeavouring to subvert the maxims which preserve the whole spirit of our own. To prove that the Americans ought not to be free we are obliged to depreciate the value of freedom itself; and we never seem to gain a paltry advantage over them in debate without attacking some of those principles or deriding some of those feelings for which our ancestors have shed their blood."

l. 5. **The words to exercise ... domination** are opposed to

under a false shew of liberty: in exacting from their agents an abject submission to their caprices they think that they are asserting their rights as free men, they are really guilty of tyranny. inverted, lit. bottom upwards: he who ought to lead is led. Burke is probably thinking of the relations which should exist between a Member of Parliament and his constituents. He told the electors of Bristol that "it ought to be the happiness and glory of a representative to live in the strictest union, the closest correspondence, and the most unreserved communication with his constituents. Their wishes ought to have great weight with him; their opinions high respect, their business unremitting attention. It is his duty to sacrifice his repose, his pleasure, his satisfaction, to theirs; and above all, ever, and in all cases, to prefer their interest to his own. But his unbiassed opinion, his mature judgment, his enlightened conscience, he ought not to sacrifice to you, to any man, or to any set of men living. Your representative owes you, not his industry only, but his judgment; and he betrays instead of serving you, if he sacrifice it to your opinion. ... If government were a matter of will upon any side, yours, without question, ought to be superior. But government and legislation are matters of reason and judgment, and not of inclination; and what sort of reason is that in which the determination precedes the discussion, in which one set of men deliberate and another decide, and where those who form the conclusions are perhaps three hundred miles distant from those who hear the argument? ... *Authoritative instructions, mandates* issued, which the member is bound blindly and implicitly to obey, to vote, and to argue for, though contrary to the clearest convictions of his judgment and conscience—these are things utterly unknown to the laws of this land, and which arise from a fundamental mistake of the whole order and tenour of our constitution."

l. 13. servile, low: mean.

l. 14. sycophants, a Greek word signifying generally 'false advisers.' With us it signifies a man who tries to gain his object by flattering and truckling to others.

l. 18. in an higher link, etc., a degree nearer to the original source of all power, viz. God. All earthly rulers are God's viceroyants (p. 103, l. 1). God delegates His power to the people, and the people in turn delegate it to governments. Cf. "Although Government certainly is an institution of Divine authority, yet its forms, and the persons who administer it, all originate from the people."—*Present Discontents*.

l. 20. in which will, etc., in the mind of God there is no opposition between will and reason, i.e. He never desires what is not right. Power is justifiable only when it is used, as God uses it, for good ends.

l. 34. **either in the act**, etc., which they do themselves, or allow others to do.

P. 106, l. 5. **life-renters**, We are only tenants for our life of the state. It is not ours to do what we like with, any more than the land which the tenant rents from a landlord is his own. Cf. p. 36, ll. 10 and 24. Mr. Bryce in his *American Commonwealth* says, "It was surprising to hear several members (of a Western American legislature who afterwards conversed with me) remark that the political point of view—the fact that they were the founders of new Commonwealths, and responsible to posterity for the foundations they laid, a point of view so trite and obvious to a European visitor that he pauses before expressing it—had not crossed their minds."—Pt. vi. ch. cxiii.

l. 8. **to cut off the entail**, i.e. to deprive posterity of the blessings of the state which God intended them to inherit.

l. 22. **combining**, etc., cf. "There are in nature certain fountains of justice, whence all civil laws are derived but as streams; and like as waters do take tinctures and tastes from the soils through which they run, so do civil laws vary according to the regions and governments where they are planted, though they proceed from the same fountains."—Bacon, *Adv.* ii. 23. 49.

l. 36. **institution**, training. A Latinism. Cf. p. 111, l. 32.

P. 107, l. 5. **ignorant**, agrees with creature, which is used as a term of contempt.

l. 6. **tender and delicate**, etc., shrinking from what is disgraceful, as a man shrinks from bodily pain.

l. 9. **the standard of its coin**, viz. public opinion, which measures the moral worth of actions, as money measures the worth of commodities. It is a standard of value.

l. 10. **Barbarism**, etc., Each generation would have to make a fresh start in everything.

l. 14. **disconnected**, etc., there would be no common life, or interests, or opinions, to make men gravitate towards one another. See note on p. 23, l. 32.

l. 18. **ten thousand times worse**, See note on p. 96, l. 4, and p. 98, l. 3.

l. 23. **pious**, See note on p. 39, l. 18.

l. 28. **incantations**, spells. Burke is alluding to the Greek legend that the daughters of Pelias, king of Thessaly, cut their father in pieces and boiled him, being told by Medea that by so doing they would restore him to youth and vigour. Mr. Payne notices that Hobbes also uses the story to illustrate 'cutting the Commonwealth in pieces, upon pretence or hope of reformation': and that Cowley employs it in a similar way in his essay on the government of Oliver Cromwell.

1. 31. **a contract**, See note on p. 3, l. 16, and p. 65, l. 13. It is quite true that society is a partnership, but it is a partnership of a peculiar kind. As the word *société* means both a partnership and society, it was not unnatural that men should regard society as in all respects analogous to an ordinary trading company. Mr. Bryce says of the Americans, "The State is not to them, as to Germans or Frenchmen, and even to some English thinkers, an ideal moral power, charged with the duty of forming the character and guiding the lives of its subjects. It is more like a commercial company, or perhaps a huge municipality created for the management of certain business in which all who reside within its bounds are interested, levying contributions and expending them on this business of common interest, but for the most part leaving the shareholders or burgesses to themselves. That an organization of this kind should trouble itself, otherwise than as matter of police, with the opinions or conduct of its members would be as unnatural as for a railway company to inquire how many of its shareholders were total abstainers." *The American Commonwealth*, pt. vi. ch. cii.

P. 108, l. 2. **it is not a partnership**, We may compare the saying of Aristotle—"The state comes into existence to render it possible to live: but it continues to exist, to render it possible to live well." See note on p. 37, l. 7. Aristotle also applies the notion of a *partnership* to the state: but he like Burke insists that it is not a partnership which men are free to enter into or not at their pleasure, or a partnership the object of which is the supply of material wants. He traces back its origin to natural instincts, and he insists that the principle of association is the realization of a noble life.

1. 13. **the inviolable oath**, etc., the will of God, who rules both man and the universe. Cf. "the great ruling principle of the moral and the natural world," p. 113, l. 14. God ordained from the beginning the continuous existence of social life; and the various states that exist are but subordinate branches of the one great society of the human race. Burke was familiarized through Cicero with the Stoic conception of the universe as one vast commonwealth or city of which all men are members. The 'lower and higher natures,' i.e. all races of men, whether high or low in the scale of civilization, 'the visible and invisible world,' i.e. the living and the dead, are thus members of one and the same community, and are bound together by the ties of common citizenship.

1. 14. **The word physical** is the Greek equivalent of the Latin *natural*. The term *moral* applies only to men, since it is only of them that we can use the terms 'good' and 'bad.'

1. 15. **This law**, etc., So far Burke has shown that society differs from an ordinary partnership in its *object* and *origin*. He

now shows another point of difference, viz., that it is not dissoluble at the will of the parties. We may notice another and very important difference, viz., that a partnership does not involve corporate life and existence.

l. 17. The municipal corporations, etc., i.e. the various states that compose the universal society of the human race. They are small societies within a larger one, just as a municipality is a small corporation included in the larger organization of the state.

l. 19. morally at liberty, it is wrong to do it, even though they may have the power to do it. Cf. "a moral competence," p. 22, l. 8. In his *Appeal to the Old Whigs* Burke repeats and emphasizes the doctrine that, as our place in the order of existence is determined for us by God, we are born to the obligations which social life implies. Political duties, like many other duties, are binding on us, though personally we may never have consented to them. Parents and children have never entered into a contract, yet their relationship imposes duties which neither can evade. Similarly no man has a right (except what necessity, which is out of and above all rule, rather imposes than bestows) to free himself from that primary engagement into which every man born into a community as much contracts by being born into it, as he contracts an obligation to certain parents by his having been derived from their bodies.

l. 20. contingent, hypothetical.

l. 23. principles, the Latin word *principia* (beginnings) was regularly used to denote the ultimate elements of which bodies were thought to be made up.

l. 24. that is not chosen, etc., which forces itself upon us. With this passage, cf. p. 33, ll. 9 *seqq.* When the necessity for revolution is self-evident and unquestionable, then only is revolution justifiable.

l. 28. is a part too, etc., is one of the laws of the universe.

l. 32. nature is disobeyed, See note on p. 53, l. 2.

P. 109, l. 8. in a different place, on a different level. One sort can justify their opinions by argument, the other sort cannot.

l. 9. They both move, etc., they do what is natural: they fall in with the laws which the ruler of the universe has ordained.

l. 17. tenet of the head and heart, cf. "which the heart owns, and the understanding ratifies," p. 86, l. 4. the great name, Scipio. The 'greater' name is Cicero. The quotation is from Cicero's *Dream of Scipio*.

l. 20. the common nature, etc., No philosophy will be accepted which is opposed to the natural feelings and instinctive tendencies of men. Men accept the opinion quoted from Cicero because they feel it to be true, and because they act upon it instinctively.



l. 22. the point of reference, viz. God.

l. 24. in the sanctuary of the heart, in their private devotions.

l. 25. as congregated, etc., in public worship. It is not the worship of *men* only, whether individually or collectively, that is required: but the worship of men 'in their corporate character,' i.e. as citizens.

l. 26. cast, caste: birth.

l. 34. the source, etc., viz. Himself.

P. 110, l. 2. fealty, see note on p. 87, l. 14. We stand to God in the same relation in which vassals stood to their feudal lord.

l. 3. oblation, offering. The word is specially used in connection with religious services. The thanksgivings of the citizens for the blessings of the state must be offered in a manner worthy of the gift and the giver.

l. 7. the dignity of persons, the allusion is to the various ranks of the priesthood.

l. 12. it is the public ornament, it exalts men by emphasizing their connection with God. It consoles and encourages them by its doctrine that God watches over them with a Fatherly care.

l. 19. to put him in mind, etc., the equality before God of the worshippers in a church is a foretaste of the equality of the saints in heaven. Cf. the *Epistle of James*, ii. 2. "If there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

P. 111, l. 18. begins to link, etc., when youths begin to see the world, of which hitherto they have only read.

l. 21. governors, men placed in charge: tutors.

l. 29. liberalize the church, By constantly coming in contact with educated laymen, clergymen are prevented from becoming narrow-minded.

l. 32. institution, cf. p. 106, l. 36.

l. 34. adhering, agrees with *we* in the preceding sentence. Notice how frequently Burke insists that the proper policy in all things is never to change but only to adapt.

P. 112, l. 3. meliorating, cf. p. 5, l. 2.

l. 6. Gothic, rude. The Goths were one of the barbarian races that overran and destroyed the Roman Empire. Consequently their name has come to denote what is barbarous or rude. The

practice of England is simply an extension of the practice, which prevailed in the middle ages, of entrusting education to the monks, the only class then capable of imparting it.

l. 12. **not despising the patrimony**, etc., cf. p. 107, l. 9 *seqq.*

l. 18. **precarious**, lit. what is gained by entreaty: and so, what cannot be relied on, because it cannot be claimed as a right.

l. 20. **a pension**, a salary, cf. p. 165, l. 3.

l. 22. **fiscal**, financial. The Latin word *fiscus* (a purse) was used to denote the state treasury.

l. 26. **have constitutional motives**, The balance of the constitution would be in danger. If the clergy were dependent for their pay upon the crown, they would naturally assist the sovereign in all that he did, whether it was legitimate or not. If, on the other hand, their pay and position depended upon the favour of the people, their efforts would be directed towards currying favour with the people only.

l. 31. **a factious clergy**, cf. p. 165, l. 10.

P. 113, l. 4. **the guardian only**, cf. p. 116, l. 11.

l. 7. **the Euripus**, the strait between Eubœa and Bœotia, on the eastern coast of Greece. The constant daily changes of the current in this strait were a subject of astonishment to the ancients. **funds and actions**, stocks and shares, which vary in value from day to day. The word *action* signifies, in French, a share in a joint-stock company.

l. 8. **men of light and leading**, the educated, to whom the masses look up for guidance. Cf. *lead*, p. 7, l. 18.

l. 9. **if they have any**, a modest disclaimer of any wish to boast of the superiority of England. What wisdom they have is at least honest and straightforward, cf. p. 100, l. 14. **open**, they conceal nothing. They do not think one thing and say another.

l. 13. **the great ruling principle**, viz. God. Cf. p. 108, l. 13.

l. 21. **the first object**, neither the state nor anything in it exists for the benefit of a class.

l. 24. **tests of its true mission**, we believe it to have come from God, because we should naturally expect God to make special provision for the poor, who stand most in need of instruction and help.

l. 28. **description**, see on p. 38, l. 25.

l. 31. **fastidious**, see on p. 26, l. 8. Though pride may make the rich reject warning and instruction, the clergy will not be offended but will still persist in the endeavour to cure their defects of mind and character. The clergy are compared to physicians, who do their best to cure a sore, however loathsome it may be.

P. 114.] 4. fat, dense.

1. 7. at the loom and in the field, among mechanics and agricultural labourers.

1. 8. satisfied, convinced.

1. 12. contingent, share. Sorrow is regarded as a tax levied upon mankind. The privileged classes in France enjoyed a large immunity from taxation; but they enjoy no such immunity from sorrow.

1. 13. sovereign balm, supreme consolation. *Balm* is a contracted form of *balsam*, the name of a tree, the gum of which was used for medicinal purposes.

1. 14. conversant about, concerned with. They have meat, and drink, and clothing: but they are harassed by fear of imaginary evils. The poor, whose thoughts move in a narrow circle, and whose experience is necessarily limited, have no imagination, nor, if they had it, would they have the leisure to exercise it.

1. 18. dole, distribution. It is connected with the verb 'to deal' in the sense of to divide, or distribute.

1. 20. to hope or fear, a man whose earthly wants are supplied or can be supplied without trouble as they arise, has no motive to labour. There is nothing to give an interest to life. But religion reminds him that there is his lot in the next world to be considered, and so supplies him with a motive to virtuous activity. With the whole passage, cf. "It is a miserable state of mind to have few things to desire and many things to fear; and yet that commonly is the case of kings; who, being at the highest, want matter of desire, which makes their minds more languishing; and have many representations of perils and shadows, which makes their minds the less clear."—Bacon, *Essay XIX.* to relieve, used intransitively: to give relief.

1. 21. over-laboured, excessive.

1. 23. palled, the word expresses the sense of weariness and disgust which comes from having more than enough of anything. Enjoyment comes from the satisfaction of a felt want, from the attainment of a desired object, or from a victory over difficulties. It seldom comes, therefore, to the rich: for they can get what they want without trouble, and it is in vain that men try to amuse them by supplying them with what they do not want, or by inventing pleasures for them for which they have no inclination.

1. 31. the newly fortunate, those who have made their own fortunes are generally purse-proud. The French call such men *nouveaux riches*, newly rich men.

1. 36. above the establishment, etc., no better provided for than the servants of the house. We see from some of the novels of

the eighteenth century that the private chaplain was, in many houses, treated like one of the servants.

P. 115, l. 4. *firmness*, because nothing that men can offer him can be any temptation to him.

l. 5. *Description*, see on p. 38, l. 25. An aversion from poverty is inherent in the majority of men. Mr. Payne notices that Burke repeats this and the following arguments from the writings of earlier church politicians.

l. 10. *censors*, originally Roman magistrates who watched over public morals and conduct. Cf. p. 153, l. 1.

l. 11. *nor will it tempt*, as it would do if the instructors of the rich were contemptible to them by reason of their poverty.

l. 12. *medicine*, for the metaphor, cf. p. 113, l. 32.

l. 17. *her mitred front*, The mitre is the head-dress of a bishop. A certain number of bishops are members of the House of Lords. Cf. p. 21, l. 16.

l. 21. *sophisters*, see on p. 28, l. 20.

l. 26. *acquired personal nobility*, as distinguished from the titles of the lay peers, which are hereditary in families.

l. 30. *precede*, take a higher social rank than.

l. 35. *so many dogs*, etc., notice the irony. See note on p. 94, l. 17.

P. 116, l. 5. *loss to the object*, though the recipients of the charity do not receive so much as they otherwise would.

l. 8. *virtue cannot exist*, virtue implies free-will: it is doing right when we might do wrong, or doing more than we are obliged to do.

Pp. 116-137. *Property is sacred. The right of the state is limited to securing that it is properly used. The spoliation of the clergy cannot be defended on the ground that poverty was enjoined by primitive Christianity: for, if the rules of the early church are binding upon the clergy of to-day, they are equally binding on the laymen who rob them. Englishmen will be on their guard against those who, under the pretext of a liberal policy, aim at the appropriation of the revenues of the church. The French clergy have with great cruelty been reduced to mere pensioners upon the alms of their atheistical persecutors. It is said that the state can abolish offices which it has itself created.*  
 1 *But suddenly to deprive men of privileges, which prescription has elevated into rights, is downright robbery. It is an act of force which cannot be defended by argument. Again, it is said*  
 3 *that it was necessary to take the property of the church in order to pay the debts of the state. But, in the first place, the state has*

no power to offer to others the property of its own citizens. In the second place, servants of the state have as good a right to their salaries as public creditors have to the payment of their debts. And, in the third place, it is irrational to recognize the debts of the old government while repudiating all its other obligations, especially when we consider that the power of the sovereign to raise loans was, to say the least, questionable. The real explanation of the confiscation is as follows. Owing to the many debts contracted by the late government there had arisen a powerful body of monied men. They were hated by the people, because what they had lent to the government had to be repaid by increased taxation: and they were despised as upstarts by the old landed nobility. To avenge themselves for this contempt, they resolved to attack the property of the church, the most lucrative offices in which were held by members of the old nobility. They found allies in the men of letters, who not only formed the public opinion of the country, but were fanatically hostile to Christianity. At the same time these men of letters posed as champions of the rights of the poor, and so served to unite the monied class and the poor in a common attack upon the church. This explains how it came about that the property of the church was attacked, while those who had grown rich by the borrowings of the Crown were left in undisturbed possession of their wealth. If the Assembly thought the clergy competent to incur a debt, it must have thought them owners of the property on the security of which alone they could borrow. But the clergy had nothing to do with the debts contracted by the Crown: so that there is no excuse for forcing them to pay them, while those who negotiated the loans are allowed to go free. The Assembly has committed in cold blood an act of greater cruelty and injustice than was ever committed in the heat of passion by a Marius or a Sulla. Henry VIII. of England made a show of respect for justice in his treatment of the English abbeyes. The French could not even plead poverty as an excuse for their robbery. A very small addition to the general taxation of the country would, on their minister's own showing, have met all the needs of the country. The clergy were ready to pay their share. And, even granting that they were to be made to pay the whole debt, why were they robbed of five millions to pay a debt of less than two and a half? The clergy had not paid considerable taxes, though not as much as the nobility and the commons. To avoid spoliation, they offered a large voluntary contribution. But this was rejected. The Assembly was bent on getting possession of the church lands, to create a new landed interest dependent on it-

*self. As all the confiscated lands could not be profitably sold at once, and as the municipalities throughout the country refused to allow the stockholders in Paris to be the sole gainers by the confiscation, and as there was a general demand for money, the Assembly, instead of selling the lands, created a paper currency to be redeemed by their eventual sale. Their sole aim now was to identify the interests of all with their own: and they did this by forcing everyone to accept their new paper currency. The old Parliaments were abolished, and the members of them were, like the priests, compelled to accept compensation in the new currency. Finally they decided not to sell the lands at all, but to put occupants in possession on favourable terms. Such tenants would, of course, be devoted to the government. But they would make up for the insecurity of their tenancy by oppressing the peasants and exhausting the soil.*

l. 11. Too much and too little, etc., The right to property is the right to the fruits of one's labour, whatever they may be.

l. 14. superintendence, cf. p. 113, l. 3.

l. 19. the beginners of their own fortune, cf. "acquired personal nobility," p. 115, l. 26. Bacon remarks in his ninth *Essay* that "those who have been bred together are more apt to envy their equals when they are raised. For it doth upbraid unto them their own fortunes, and pointeth at them, and cometh oftener into their remembrance, and incurreth likewise more into the note of others; and envy ever redoubleth from speech and fame."

l. 21. mortification, self-inflicted penance.

l. 22. askance, lit. obliquely, i.e. with jealousy or disfavour.

l. 24. are distinguishing, they can tell when a man means what he says. Just as the peculiarities in a man's mode of speech show from what part of the country he comes, so we can judge from his mode of speech whether he is sincere or not.

l. 26. patois, a dialect. the cant, etc., the affected and unmeaning language of fraud. The word *cant* (Lat. *cantare*, to sing) meant properly a beggar's whine, and so hypocrisy. He explains on p. 117, l. 27, that underneath their specious language they concealed projects of robbery.

l. 28. affect, pretend.

l. 29. evangelic, See on p. 13, l. 25.

l. 30. in us, viz. the laymen. The Gospels insist on the incompatibility of riches and virtue. It has already been explained that poverty nowadays makes men and institutions contemptible and powerless. The spirit of the gospel rule is

observed if we do not set too high a value upon wealth for its own sake.

P. 117, l. 2. **into common**, according to the practice of the early church. Cf. *Acts of the Apostles*, ii. 44, "And all that believed were together, and had all things common: and sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need."

l. 7. **are not among**, etc., are not included in our modes of raising revenue.

l. 8. **ways and means, and supply**, are technical parliamentary terms. The House of Commons in 'Committee of Supply' determines what expenditure shall be sanctioned for the year: in 'Committee of Ways and Means' it determines how the money shall be raised. **The Jews**, etc., the money-lenders in London are not expecting to be asked by government for advances on the security of the property of the English Church. See note on p. 93, l. 31.

l. 9. **Change Alley**, the name of a street in the city of London.

l. 13. **whom you would wish to quote**, i.e. who is respectable: whom you would not be ashamed of referring to as an authority.

l. 19. **to pledge**, etc., lit. to drink the health of, i.e. to wish success to their crimes. "The cup of their abominations" is a scriptural expression.

l. 24. **proscription**, confiscation. In the civil wars which occurred towards the end of the Roman republic, the leader of the victorious faction used to *proscribe* (lit. write up in public) the names of those of his enemies whose lives or goods were forfeited.

l. 25. **selfish enlargement**, etc., for the form of expression cf. p. 89, l. 10. This professed desire to secure toleration and to deprive any one religious body of exclusive privileges is merely an excuse for robbing the church. See on p. 116, l. 26.

l. 32. **the law of social union**, the conditions under which society is possible. If society did not render property secure, the chief reason for living in society would disappear. The term *law* is used to denote the connections between phenomena, because those connections were supposed to be the result of the divine will. The laws of nature are the ordinances and decrees of God.

l. 33. **public service**, supplying the wants of the state.

P. 118, l. 1. **descriptions**, see on p. 38, l. 25.

l. 12. **the harpies of usury**, grasping and extortionate usurers. The harpies (lit. spoilers) of Roman mythology were monsters, half birds and half women. Virgil describes one of them thus,

"A maid above, a bird below:  
Noisome and foul the belly's flow:

The hands are taloned : Famine bleak  
Sits ever ghastly on the cheek."

When Æneas and his companions were on their way from Troy to Italy they were once attacked, while eating, by the Harpies.

"When sudden from the mountain swoop,  
Fierce charging down, the Harpy troop,  
Devour, contaminate, befoul,  
With sickening stench and hideous howl.

A second time the assailants fly  
From other regions of the sky,  
With crooked claws the banquet waste,  
And poison whatsoever they taste."—*Æn.* iii. 215.

- l. 28. the faithful, members of the Catholic church.
- l. 29. tenderness, consideration. They despise them, but they will not allow them actually to starve.
- l. 32. By the allowance Burke means the *pension* which was to be granted to the priests. See on p. 112, l. 20.
- l. 36. the academies, etc., see on p. 75, l. 23. The Jacobin club was composed of men of the most extreme democratic views. It was so called because the meetings were held in a building belonging to some Dominican friars, who were commonly called Jacobins, because the Church of St. Jacques (*St. James*, Lat. *Jacobus*) had been assigned to them when, in the 13th century, they first arrived in Paris.—*Gardiner*. Burke defines Jacobinism as an attempt "to excite the lowest description of the people to range themselves under ambitious men for the pillage and destruction of the more eminent orders and classes of society."
- P. 119, l. 3. prescription, see on p. 94, l. 13.
- l. 4. fictitious persons, the distinction between priests and laymen is not a natural one like the difference of sex, for instance.
- l. 11. constructive, given to them by the act of government. The state creates establishments for different purposes. When those purposes are no longer desired, or can be better attained in another way, it is free to destroy or modify the establishment. It is, however, a generally recognized principle that, upon the destruction of an old establishment, the existing holders of offices shall not be allowed to suffer.
- l. 25. a sophistry, see on p. 28, l. 20.
- l. 30. dungeons and iron cages, the allusion is to the punishments inflicted in the reign of Louis XI.
- l. 31. tender of, shall we treat them with more consideration? cf. p. 118, l. 29.
- p. 120, l. 2. covered, justified, cf. p. 104, l. 7.



l. 3. **national faith**, cf. "public faith," p. 120, l. 27. *Faith* means *credit*: see on p. 42, l. 32.

l. 4. **tender and delicate**, cf. p. 107, l. 6.

l. 11. **first and original faith**, etc., society is bound in the first instance to protect, etc.

l. 12. **title**, see on p. 16, l. 34.

l. 16. **expressed or implied**, the creditor was not told, nor did he understand, that individuals would be robbed to satisfy his claims.

l. 22. **engaged**, pledged.

l. 23. **No man**, etc., No man can offer as security for the money which he wishes to borrow the money which he intends to steal.

l. 27. **influenced**, cf. p. 85, l. 15.

l. 28. **not according**, etc., They did not keep faith with those whose claims were the strongest, but with those whom they were most anxious to please.

P. 121, l. 12. **respectable**, ironical.

l. 16. **virgin**, ironical. It connotes youth and purity.

l. 21. **prerogative**, see on p. 26, l. 35.

l. 27. **trust**, power; so called because power is delegated to the sovereign by the people. See on p. 105, l. 18.

l. 28. **that dangerous power**, viz. the dominion over the public purse.

l. 31. **a body of property**, viz. the claims of the monied men from whom the sovereign had borrowed.

P. 122, l. 5. **circulation of property**, property did not easily change hands.

l. 8. **Family settlements**, it was possible in France to tie up property for a much longer period than in England, where settlements cannot operate beyond the life of a person living at the time when they are made, and twenty-one years after. Burke means that there was less land for sale in France than in England because, in France, so many of the holders of land had only a life-interest in it, and were therefore unable to sell it.

l. 10. **right of recovery**, a feudal lord could at any time repurchase lands which had once belonged to his estate, and the heirs of a landowner could repurchase any portion of the estate which their ancestors had alienated, whether the existing holder wished to part with it or not. In these and other ways the law favoured the accumulation of lands in the hands of a few owners.

l. 12. **unalienably**, for *in* we should use the prefix *in*.

1. 18. connected with their distresses, heavy taxes were imposed to pay the interest on the debts contracted by the government.

1. 23. naked, i.e. without money.

1. 26. sometimes, I have pointed out in the Introduction that the nobility formed practically a caste resting on birth.

1. 29. the usual means, viz. family alliances. Bacon, in his ninth *Essay*, remarks that "men of noble birth are noted to be envious towards new men when they rise. For the distance is altered; and it is like a deceit of the eye, that when others come on they think themselves go back."

1. 32. noble, members of the nobility.

P. 123, l. 1. natural, which it ought to have. See on p. 53, l. 2.

1. 7. commendatory abbies, abbeys held *in commendam*, i.e. in trust. When a benefice fell vacant, the patron of it could allow any one to draw the revenues of it until he chose to appoint a permanent incumbent.

1. 18. description, class, cf. p. 38, l. 25.

1. 25. engaged, bound.

1. 29. the two academies, "The famous Academy of Sciences (*The Academy*), and the Academy of Inscriptions, so called because its special office was the devising of inscriptions in honour of Louis XIV., and in celebration of his various civil and military triumphs."—*Payne*. The Academy grew out of a small literary club, composed of seven or eight persons, which was started in Paris in 1629. Richelieu conceived the idea of making it a public body, holding regular meetings. The King issued letters patent authorizing and establishing the new society in 1635, and the sanction of the Parliament was given two and a half years later. According to the statutes of its foundation, "the Academy's principal function shall be to work with all the care and all the diligence possible at giving sure rules to our language, and rendering it pure, eloquent, and capable of treating the arts and sciences."—Mr. Matthew Arnold on *The Literary Influence of Academies*. I have given an account of the *Encyclopædia* in the Introduction.

P. 124, l. 2. fanatical, see on p. 28, l. 27. from thence, etc., those who are anxious to make converts are easily led to persecute those who refuse to be converted. Cf. p. 125, l. 7. proselytism means a desire to make converts. Proselyte is a Greek word signifying 'one who comes over to a belief.'

1. 9. avenues to fame, lit. the ways which lead to it; the modes of winning it. Burke has said already, p. 43, l. 23, that the men of letters have, like pioneers, prepared the way for the revolutionists.

1. 15. taste, see on p. 74, l. 9.

## NOTES.

l. 18. **Atheistical fathers**, exponents of the doctrine of atheism. The term *fathers* is applied to those priests of the early church whose writings are regarded as decisive upon questions of faith and practice. A **bigot** is an obstinate devotee to a creed. The atheists are as deaf to arguments for religion as the monks are to arguments against it.

l. 21. **men of the world**, shrewd men: men who have learned wisdom by experience.

l. 28. **persecution**, Burke is alluding to the proceedings taken against the Encyclopædists. The Jesuits were jealous because the theological articles had not been entrusted to them. They first attacked the Encyclopædists indirectly. A certain Abbé de Prades, who was a friend of Diderot and was suspected of writing the theological articles in the first volumes that appeared of the *Encyclopædia*, was condemned and deprived of his license for denying in an official exercise at the Sorbonne the existence of innate ideas. The Jesuits next induced the Archbishop of Paris to issue a pastoral condemning the heresy of De Prades, and referring to unnamed works teeming with error and impiety. Next the Jansenist Bishop of Auxerre made a direct attack not only on the *Encyclopædia*, but on Montesquieu and Buffon as well. Diderot replied to this attack of the Jansenists. In February, 1752, the two volumes which had been issued were suppressed by a decree of the King's Council. But though the decree remained unrevoked, being, indeed, probably issued only to pacify the church, Diderot was allowed and even requested to continue the work. The ecclesiastical party became more angry as the popularity of the book increased with the issue of every new volume. In 1758 Helvetius' book *De l'Esprit* appeared. The church party represented him as being at one with the Encyclopædists, and in 1759 an information was laid both against Helvetius' book and the *Encyclopædia*, as books hostile to religion and morals. Before the court came to any decision, the Council of State interposed in the beginning of 1759, and suppressed the *Encyclopædia* altogether, forbidding the sale of the published volumes and the publication of any new ones. Diderot published the concluding ten volumes in 1765. They bore Neufchâtel on the title-page, and were distributed privately to the subscribers. The clergy levelled a decree against the new book: but the decree was quashed by the Parliament. The government, however, ordered all who had copies of the book to deliver it up immediately to the police. Eventually the copies were returned to the owners with some petty curtailments. Morley's *Diderot and the Encyclopædists*, vol. 1, ch. v.

P. 125, l. 1. **what ... what**, partly ... partly.

l. 7. **as controversial zeal**, etc., see note on p. 124, l. 2.

l. 12. the thunderbolt, the sudden and irresistible intervention of despotism. A popular commotion is compared to an *earthquake* because it overturns everything which exists. Both Frederick of Prussia and Catherine of Russia patronized the new philosophy.

l. 21. avenues to opinion, the instruments by which public opinion is influenced. Cf. p. 124, l. 9.

l. 27. pretended to, this insinuation is not justified.

l. 32. obnoxious wealth, viz. the monied interest. See p. 122, l. 17.

P. 126, l. 3. not upon any principles, etc., cf. p. 121, l. 33.

l. 9, other descriptions, i.e. other kinds of wealth than that of the monied men.

l. 11. an appearance, the exact equivalent of the Greek word *phenomenon*, which is now more generally used in this sense.

l. 16. invidious, which was regarded with disfavour. See on p. 28, l. 20.

l. 23. natural and legal, See on p. 106, l. 22. The treatment of the clergy is opposed both to common sense and to law.

l. 31, the new institute, the new philosophy which now rules in France.

P. 127, l. 1. engagement, a contract.

l. 17. comptrollers general, the Ministers of Finance.

l. 21. Mr. Laborde, he was employed by the government of Louis XV. as an agent for raising money.

l. 23. jobbing, the word signifies the manipulation of public matters for one's own personal advantage.

l. 26. the duke de Choiseul, He was minister from 1758-1770.

l. 33. the duke d'Aiguillon, He succeeded Choiseul as minister of foreign affairs. During his ministry France was peculiarly unfortunate in her wars and foreign relations. With regard to the family of Noailles, the Maréchal de Noailles had distinguished himself first in the war of the Austrian succession, and afterwards as a minister. His son served Louis XVI. A younger son of this family and D'Aiguillon were the proposers of the first motions brought forward on the famous night of August 4th when the Assembly decreed the abolition of feudal privileges. See on p. 77, l. 9.

P. 128, l. 10. a sort of profaneness, cf. p. 116, l. 11. Property is sacred.

l. 16. proscription, see on p. 117, l. 24.

l. 34. with the return, they were afraid that if they got back their property, they would get back their power too. Their cruelty, therefore, was the result of fear. Cf. p. 43, l. 31.

P. 129, l. 6. **spread a sort of colour**, give an appearance of justice to. Below, l. 19, Burke calls the rights of men "a magazine of offensive weapons": by which he means that the doctrine that all men are equal justifies an attack on all inequalities. Cf. p. 64, l. 3.

l. 11. **improved state**, ironical.

l. 15. **Harry**, Mr. Payne points out that this is simply the ancient and French way of pronouncing 'Henry.'

l. 17. **studied in your new schools**, learnt your new principles of morality and equity. See p. 127, l. 5. Sylla and Marius were rivals for the headship of the Roman state in the first century B.C. Sylla was victorious in the struggle and was made perpetual Dictator, B.C. 82.

l. 19. **magazine**, a storehouse: used specially for a place where weapons and ammunition are stored.

l. 21. **the Jacobins**, see on p. 118, l. 36.

l. 27. **as every crime**, etc., the church as a whole is not to be deprived of its property because of the crimes of a few of its members. In his defence of the church, pp. 156 *seqq.*, Burke lays special stress on the virtues of the priests as individuals.

l. 28. **in that dark age**, ironical. Cf. p. 129, l. 11.

l. 29. **a creature of prejudice**, an irrational institution.

l. 33. **operose**, laborious.

P. 130, l. 6. **incantation**, see on p. 107, l. 28. He might have condemned the endowments of the church as irrational, and as a selfish violation of the just claims of all to equal rights and possessions.

l. 10. **colours**, see on p. 129, l. 6. Unless tyrants recognized the claims of justice, they would not take the trouble to justify their acts.

l. 12. **Whilst Shame**, a man cannot be wholly bad who has not wholly lost the sense of shame.

l. 17. **will pray**, etc., will pray that his anticipations of evil may not be realized.

l. 27. **wealth is crime enough**, the poor will always find a pretext for robbing those who are better off than themselves. Sir John Denham, the author of these lines, lived 1615-1660.

P. 131, l. 1. **This same wealth**, the wealth alluded to in the lines just quoted. **same** simply shows that the subject to which it is attached has been already mentioned. **lese nation**, see on p. 78, l. 10.

l. 3. **polity**, see on p. 9, l. 31.

l. 4. **in one object**, viz. the church.

l. 7. the states, cf. p. 38, l. 24.

l. 9. of justice and mercy, On p. 132, l. 34, he says that the confiscation was both *partial* and *cruel*.

P. 132, l. 15. *sinking* of debt, providing for the gradual diminution of debt.

P. 133, l. 1. ran before, anticipated and exceeded.

l. 12. their lords of articles, see on p. 75, l. 11. For the Jacobins see on p. 118, l. 36.

l. 17. as *partial*, because it was *partial*.

ll. 29, 30. the *excise* includes duties on things manufactured and consumed in the country, such for instance as the tax on native liquors. *duties of custom* are those levied on commodities imported from abroad. They are both *indirect taxes*, i.e. they are not levied on the person by whom they are ultimately paid. The liquor seller adds to the price of his liquor the amount of the duty which he has to pay to government. The tax, therefore, is paid ultimately by the consumers of the liquor. A *direct tax*, such as the income tax, is paid by the person on whom it is first levied.

l. 32. the *capitation*, a personal tax. In France it was very unequally imposed. The word signifies literally a tax levied by heads: Lat. *caput*, a head.

P. 134, l. 3. of no trivial produce, they yielded a large return to the treasury.

l. 8. redeemed themselves, they had paid a lump sum down, once and for all. The system of taxation in France was grossly unfair. The sum paid by the privileged classes may have been large, but their incomes were large. The question with regard to a tax is not so much—what is the amount of it? but—after paying it, how much remains for the necessities of life? In France the grievance was twofold. In the first place, the privileged classes did not pay their proper share of the taxes which they did pay in common with the rest: and, in the second place, there was a number of very oppressive taxes from which they were exempted altogether.

l. 22. *promised by*, expected from.

l. 30. The new landed interest, i.e. the monied men, who were to be put in possession of the church lands.

l. 31. connected with it, etc., if the republic fell, the lands would be restored to the church.

l. 33. *ransom*, viz. the sum which they offered to escape the confiscation.

P. 135, l. 6. a sudden *diversion*, if the amount of money decreases, prices must fall.

l. 10. **No distress**, notice the strength of the expression. The revolutionists loved evil and hated good. Cf. p. 43, l. 36.

l. 13. **to take stock**, to sell the lands for shares of different kinds. Of course it would be difficult to decide what price to ask for land if the price was paid in something that was constantly fluctuating in value.

l. 23. **They panted**, etc., the people in the municipalities felt the want of money. They would do anything to get it. They would, therefore, support the confiscation, because money could be got by selling or mortgaging the church lands.

l. 29. **supply**, a technical term for a vote of money by Parliament.

l. 30. **boding**, ominous. He foretold disaster if his demands were not complied with.

l. 31. **converting their bankers**, putting the monied men into possession of the lands which properly belonged to bishops and abbots.

l. 33. **a paper currency**, see note on p. 42, l. 35. The bank of discount made advances to the government. Burke calls it a paper-mill, because its notes were issued so much in excess of its real property that there was no chance of their being redeemed. They therefore had simply the value of paper. They were "fictitious wealth": cf. p. 48, l. 15. A note is a promise on the part of a bank or a government to pay the sum named on it. A piece of paper, the intrinsic value of which is a fraction of an anna, is received as equivalent to ten rupees, simply because we believe in the solvency and the honesty of those who issued it. If we suspect the solvency or the honesty of the government, the value of its notes will be simply their value as paper.

P. 136, l. 1. The word **to discount** means to advance money, which is not yet due, upon a security. The bank of discount was formed in 1776. So long as it was not forced to lend money to government its business prospered and its notes were willingly accepted. It was eventually ruined by the demands which the government made upon it, and was suppressed by a decree of the Convention in 1793.

l. 7. **on the same bottom**, on the same footing. The new currency was to be accepted as payment for the church lands, when they were sold. Everybody therefore was interested in maintaining the new government: for, if the government was destroyed, the church would recover its lands: and the holders of paper money would find their paper worthless.

l. 19. **the dictators**, the absolute rulers. The word signifies properly a magistrate who was appointed by the Romans, in any great emergency, and was invested with absolute power.

l. 20. the parliaments, see note on p. 42, l. 6.

l. 28. a boon, ironical.

l. 34. church paper, the currency which was to be redeemed by the sale of the church lands.

P. 137, l. 8. outrage upon credit, they force every one to trust them, by forcing every one to accept their paper money.

l. 21. a fine, a name given to the lump sum which a tenant sometimes paid down when he entered into occupation, and in consideration of which he obtained his holding at a lower annual rent.

l. 23. gift, in feudal law the word signifies that the person who received the gift bound himself to certain services to him from whom he received it. Those who received lands on favourable terms from the Assembly understood that they were bound to favour the Assembly in return.

l. 29. waste in woods, cutting down timber.

l. 30. usury, cf. p. 215, l. 35.

l. 35. precarious, see on p. 112, l. 18.

Pp. 137-150. *The revolutionists have the impudence to justify their policy as the only alternative to despotism. But it is evident that the old government of France might easily have been transformed into a limited and constitutional monarchy like that of England. The enemy of democracy is not necessarily the friend of tyranny. The so-called democracy of France seems likely to become a narrow and mischievous oligarchy. Even judging a pure democracy on its merits, those who have had most experience of it agree in regarding it as more oppressive than tyranny. Besides, even if we allow it to be a good form of government, monarchy is good also. Monarchy, at least, has this advantage, that it does not exclude the principle of popular control, while the supremacy and direct rule of the people excludes any control of them by a monarch. No one doubts that the French monarchy, like all absolute monarchies, needed to be reformed; but in 1789 all Frenchmen were agreed that it was only reform, and not revolution, that was wanted. The population of France was numerous and increasing. There was a steady flow of bullion into the kingdom. There was every sign of material wealth, and intellectual culture. Such things cannot be under an utterly vicious government. The government, indeed, for many years had been culpably weak and indulgent. The only results of the Revolution so far have been to drive numbers out of the country, to diminish the wealth, and augment the misery of the people.*



P. 138, l. 5. *philosophic*, Burke uses the term because the revolutionists justified all that they did by reference to abstract principles of reason. Cf. p. 129, l. 17.

l. 6. *strain their throats*, etc., declaim as loudly as they can.

l. 11. *crude*, see on p. 39, l. 2.

l. 18. *sophistry*, see on p. 28, l. 20.

l. 20. *theory and practice*, ideal and actual governments.

l. 21. *despotism of the multitude*, notice how Burke condemns the new government by the mere definition which he gives of it. In substituting democracy for monarchy the French thought that they were substituting freedom for oppression. As a matter of fact they were exchanging the rule of one for the tyranny of many.

l. 22. *a monarchy*, he is referring, of course, to the English monarchy.

l. 28. *criminal ill intention*, the desire, namely, of robbing a nation of the happiness which it would enjoy under democratic rule.

l. 29. *tempered*, modified.

l. 33. *when actually possessed*, Burke's proof of this assertion is given on pp. 38-9.

P. 139, l. 5. *description*, kind. Cf. p. 38, l. 25.

l. 8. *oligarchy*, See p. 220, l. 10.

l. 10. *upon abstract principles*, without reference to the condition and circumstances of those who are to live under it.

l. 22. *the legitimate forms of government*, See on p. 104, l. 25. It was the custom with Plato and Aristotle first to determine the *normal* form or forms of government, and then to describe the declensions from, or corrupted forms of them. A normal form was one under which the end for which the state exists could be realized. Plato, in his *Republic*, after sketching the ideally perfect form of government, arranges the imperfect forms, then actually existing, in the following order: timocracy, or a government of the Spartan type: oligarchy: democracy: tyranny. In his *Politics*, after saying that the best form of government is the rule of a trained and scientific statesman, he ranges the imperfect forms as follows:—monarchy is the best, and tyranny the worst. A good democracy is better than tyranny and oligarchy, but inferior to aristocracy and monarchy. Aristotle, in one part of his *Politics*, makes Kingship, Aristocracy, and Polity (a constitution which puts power into the hands of the large mass of men of moderate means) normal forms: while tyranny, oligarchy, and democracy are the corruptions of them. Later on in the same book he states that 'Absolute Kingship' and 'Ideal

Aristocracy' alone are natural forms of government, on the ground that they represent the rule of virtue adequately equipped. He conceives of democracy as a state in which the poor rule for their own advantage. Later on in the *Politics*, again, he points out how each kind of government may assume many forms, and he makes what is for a Greek a very remarkable statement, namely, that the constitution of a state is really dependent upon its social conditions.

P. 140, l. 3. *polity*, See on p. 9, l. 31.

l. 9. *balmy*, soothing, healing. See on p. 78, l. 17.

l. 11. *generous*, See on p. 39, l. 34.

l. 19. *compounded with other forms*, when, for instance, the monarch is subjected to the control of representatives of the people, as in England.

l. 21. *Bolingbroke*, See on p. 99, l. 33.

l. 26. *description*, cf. p. 139, l. 5.

l. 29. *the speculation*, the theory.

l. 33. *sycophant*, See on p. 105, l. 14.

P. 141, l. 6. *which is mixed*, etc., cf. p. 105, l. 30.

l. 9. *unqualified or ill-qualified*, absolute or nearly so.

l. 20. *of necessity*, necessary. For the metaphor of the fabric, cp. p. 38, l. 19, and p. 146, l. 27.

l. 22. *theoretic experimental*, two terms of strong condemnation. Burke looks with suspicion upon all constitutions which, however ingeniously devised, have not been submitted to 'the solid test of experience.' All France, etc., This is a mistake. "There was not a single great change made by the Assembly, which had not been demanded in the lists of grievances that had been sent up by the nation to Versailles. The division of the kingdom into districts, and the proportioning of the representation to taxes and population; the suppression of the intendants; the suppression of all monks and the sale of their goods and estates; the abolition of feudal rights, duties, and services; the alienation of the king's domains; the demolition of the Bastille: these and all else were in the prayers of half the petitions that the country had laid at the feet of the king."—*Morley*.

P. 142, l. 6. *Tahmas Kouli Khan* was born in 1688 in the province of Khorassan. He distinguished himself by clearing Persia of the hordes of Afghans and Turks that were oppressing the country. Being dissatisfied with an order to disband his army, he seized the Shah and put his own son on the throne. Upon the death of this son, he was himself elected Shah, under the title of Nadir Shah. His invasion of Hindustan and

capture of Delhi are well known. But his rule in Persia was so tyrannical, and his cruelty and avarice were so great, that a conspiracy was formed against him in his camp, and he was murdered in 1747.

l. 24. **population.** The increase of population in France made the burden of taxation more felt, and so precipitated the revolution. The number of the population is, in all cases, less important than the condition of it. It is often where the greatest wretchedness and misery prevail that we find the population increases fastest, because prudential considerations do not operate to retard its growth.

l. 27. **Intendants**, the officers in charge of districts. The terms *intendant* and *generality* correspond pretty closely to our *Collector* and *Collectorate*.

P. 143, l. 5. **term**, used in its literal sense of *limit*.

l. 7. **acme**, a Greek word signifying *height*.

l. 8. **in these speculations**, See on p. 13, l. 14.

l. 9. **taking ground on**, cf. p. 102, l. 26.

l. 34. **The middle term**, the average.

P. 144, l. 16. **The wealth**, With regard to the wealth of a country the question is not—What wealth is there in the country? but—How is it distributed? The masses in France were miserably poor.

l. 21. **ready in the circulation**, cf. p. 122, l. 5.

l. 25. **British Dominions**, the British Isles.

P. 146, l. 1. **opportunity**, convenience.

l. 23. **awes and commands the imagination**, by which we cannot help being struck.

l. 26. **latent**, The revolutionists contended that the vices of the old government were patent. Burke, on the other hand, says that its merits were evident, while it would require a careful search to discover any faults in it which would justify the destruction of it.

l. 34. **its capacities**, etc., cf. p. 138, l. 33.

P. 147, l. 3. **he must admit**, etc., see note on p. 42, l. 18. De Tocqueville remarks that the spirit of reform, at this time, was not confined to France.

l. 12. **all sorts of projects**, etc. De Tocqueville points out that the liberality of the government in the encouragement of trade, in the allotment of subventions, and in the execution of public works, involved an expenditure in excess of its revenues; and that there was a dangerously democratic tone in many of its ordinances and decrees.

l. 13. countenance, cf. p. 34, l. 1.

l. 18. public spirit, devotion to the public good.

l. 25. the good intentions, they were instigated by a malicious desire to emphasize and exaggerate the faults of the government.

l. 29. if it deserves such a name, Burke points out afterwards that the new representative system was based on inconsistent principles, p. 204, l. 15: and that the executive and the legislative were out of harmony with one another, p. 226, l. 33.

P. 148, l. 2. told, counted: cf. *tale*, number, l. 7.

l. 3. philosophic, see on p. 138, l. 5.

l. 12. Circean, Circe was a witch. When Ulysses and his companions, on their return from Troy, landed on her island, she turned a number of them into swine. She restored them afterwards to human shape, and for a year they spent whole days eating and drinking. Homer, *Odyssey*, bk. 10. The revolutionists would call English government despotic; but many Frenchmen seem to prefer it to the so-called free government which has been set up in their own country. Cf. p. 138, l. 21.

l. 17. in specie, in gold and silver, as opposed to paper. Cf. p. 43, l. 1.

l. 19. Laputa and Balnibarbi, two countries visited by Gulliver in his travels. In his description of them Swift satirizes the pedantry of philosophers. It would seem as if France had been handed over to shallow theorists to experiment upon.

l. 28. mendicancy, This poverty would be more justly described as the result of the old system. The Revolution was itself hurried on by the prevailing scarcity.

l. 30. standing, permanent.

l. 32. police, measures. It is the same word as polity. See p. 9, l. 31.

P. 149, l. 3. legislative clubs, cf. p. 75, ll. 12 and 17.

l. 9. quackish, such as is practised by impostors.

P. 150, l. 7. equivocal in her appearance, cf. p. 8, l. 31.

l. 9. in her train, lit. among her retinue.

Pp. 150-155. *The nobles did not deserve the treatment that they have received. They still deserve the praise bestowed on them by Henry IV., whom it is the fashion with the revolutionists to praise. They were cultivated, upright, generous, considerate men. They were fair in their dealings with their tenants: and, as they had no power, they could not be responsible for any of the grievances of the people. Their standard of private morality, it is true, was not high: and they alienated the*

*higher class of the commons by their exclusiveness. But tenacity of one's rights is a good principle in itself. Jealousy of nobility is nothing but jealousy of the honour paid to virtue.*

l. 15. had not been, would not have been.

l. 19. the Hanse-towns, From the middle of the twelfth century towns began to grow up on the coast of the Baltic, but "the real importance of them is to be dated from their famous union into the Hanseatic Confederacy. - The origin of this is rather obscure, but it may certainly be nearly referred in point of time to the middle of the thirteenth century, and accounted for by the necessity of mutual defence, which piracy by sea and pillage by land had taught the merchants of Germany. The nobles endeavoured to obstruct the formation of this league, which indeed was in great measure designed to withstand their exactions. It powerfully maintained the influence which the free imperial cities were at this time acquiring. Eighty of the most considerable places constituted the Hanseatic Confederacy, divided into four colleges, whereof Lubec, Cologne, Brunswick, and Dantzic, were the leading towns. Lubec held the chief rank, and became, as it were, the patriarchal see of the league: whose province it was to preside in all general discussions for mercantile, political, or military purposes, and to carry them into execution."—Hallam, *Middle Ages*, iii. 325.

l. 21. Orsini and Vitelli, names of two noble Italian houses. They are mentioned without any special historical reference.

l. 23. The Mamalukes, The word Mamaluke signifies a slave. A bodyguard of Turkish slaves was formed under the successor of Saladin in Egypt, and they ultimately usurped the supreme power. Their kingdom was overthrown in 1517, but they remained a powerful and influential body in Egypt down to 1811 when they were massacred by Mahomed Ali. The *Nayres* are a tribe of aborigines in Malabar.

l. 26. The statues, etc., He uses this metaphor because the Virtues were once personified and worshipped as deities. The meaning is that the obligation to mercy and equity might temporarily have been suspended.

l. 27. tenderest, See on p. 107, l. 6. Cruelty is not condemned when it is necessary to the prevention of cruelty.

l. 33: most abhorrent from, who shrink most from.

l. 34. this civil war, etc., a war between vices is compared to a war between citizens of the same country. Cruelty and fraud are met by cruelty and fraud.

P. 151, l. 14. contribution, payment of taxes.

l. 21. a despotic democracy, etc., See p. 138, l. 21 *seqq.* of reciprocal control. Burke is thinking of the government of England, under which the people control the executive through the Parliament.

l. 28. insidious, they only praised Henry IV. with a view to disparage Louis XVI.

l. 29. panegyric, means, literally, such a speech as would be delivered in a public assembly (Gr. *panegyris*), i.e. a complimentary speech.

l. 35. Well it is, it is lucky for them

P. 152, ll. 8, 9. He spent, etc., for prerogatives, see on p. 26, l. 35: and for the meaning of capital, see on p. 39, l. 15. The meaning is that, although he did not always exercise his powers to the full, he never yielded his right to exercise them if he pleased. He transmitted intact to his successors the stock of power which he had himself inherited. to break in upon; means to take anything from: to diminish.

l. 13. Because he knew, he knew that gratitude will not make men loyal, so he made men afraid to resist him. Cf. p. 92, ll. 14 *seqq.*

l. 14. merited, earned. A Latinism.

l. 23. But, Burke proceeds to answer an imaginary objector.

l. 34. delicate, See on p. 107, l. 6.

P. 153, l. 1. censorial, See on p. 115, l. 10.

l. 2. officious, used in its literal sense of 'ready to perform services.' The word is now used as equivalent to 'meddlesome.'

l. 3. with a good military tone, in their sentiments, language, and conduct, they were what we should wish soldiers to be.

l. 25. in partnership, Sometimes the landlord, instead of charging rent, advanced to the tenant a part of what was required for working the farm, and then divided the produce with him. This kind of tenure was called *métairie*, and the farmer was called a *métayer*. See Fawcett's *Political Economy*, bk. ii. ch. vii.

l. 32. not noble, cf. p. 122, l. 32: no manner of power, I have pointed out in the Introduction that one of the grievances against the nobles was that they retained their privileges after they had ceased to do anything to earn them.

P. 154, l. 10. A foolish imitation, etc., cf. "But at Longchamp, as elsewhere, we remark, for one thing, that dame and cavalier are waited on each by a kind of human familiar, named *Jokei*. Little elf, or imp; though young, already withered; with its withered air of premature vice, of knowingness, of completed elfhood; useful in various emergencies. The name *jokei* (*Jockey*)

comes from the English ; as the thing also fancies that it does. Our Anglo-mania, in fact, has grown considerable ; prophetic of much. If France is to be free, why shall she not, now when dread war is hushed, love neighbouring Freedom ? Cultivated men, your Dukes de Liancourt, de la Rochefoucault, admire the English Constitution, the English National Character ; would import what of it they can, of what is lighter, especially if it be light as wind, how much easier the freighting ! Non-Admiral Duke de Chartres (not yet D'Orleans or Egalité) flies to and fro across the Strait ; importing English Fashions : this he, as hand-and-glove with an English Prince of Wales, is surely qualified to do. Carriages and saddles ; top-boots, and *rédingotes*, as we call riding-coats. Nay the very mode of riding : for now no man on a level with his age but will trot *à l'Anglaise* (in English fashion), rising in the stirrups ; scornful of the old sitfast method, in which, according to Shakespeare, 'butter and eggs' go to market. Also, he can urge the fervid wheels, this brave Chartres of ours ; no whip in Paris is rasher and surer than the unprofessional one of Monseigneur. Elf *jockeys* we have seen ; but see now real Yorkshire jockeys, and what they ride on, and train : English racers for French races. ... Beautiful days of international communion ! Swindling and blackguardism have stretched hands across the Channel, and saluted mutually."—Carlyle, *French Revolution*, book ii. ch. 6.

l. 18. They countenanced too much, etc., De Tocqueville remarks that though the theories of the philosophers struck at the root of the privileges of the nobles, yet the nobles welcomed them as remarkable efforts of ingenuity, not foreseeing that they would soon be acted on by an angry people.

l. 21. Those of the commons, etc., cf. p. 122, ll. 19 *seqq.*

l. 25. other nobility, viz. the hereditary landed nobility. Cf. p. 56, ll. 23 *seqq.*

l. 30. The military, offices in the army.

P. 155, l. 4. a mere work of art, it is not sincere, but is got up with a purpose.

l. 16. order, the word signifies properly a class of architecture. It is used purposely in view of the metaphor which follows. The *capital* is the head of a pillar, and, in the Corinthian style, is very graceful.

l. 19. wise and good man, viz. Cicero.

l. 20. liberal and benevolent, A liberal man is not jealous of the honours which others receive : a benevolent man is pleased to see others made happy by being distinguished.

l. 23. giving a body, etc., a title is a substantial and permanent mark of the reputation which a man enjoys. Mac-

kintosh's criticism on this passage is as follows—"The creation of an order is itself undesirable. It creates a new and artificial inequality amongst the members of a state in addition to the inevitable inequalities of fortune. It, therefore, aggravates the evil of selfish and antisocial interests. With regard to France in particular, the character and sentiments of the orders had been formed under an arbitrary system. They were therefore unfit to form part of or to exist under a free government. They had become mere dependents of the Crown. The nobility lived by war and Court favour. Considered as a legislative order, they ceased to exist after the union of the orders in one Assembly, and the abolition of their feudal rights in August, 1789. The question, therefore, for the Assembly was, what place they were to hold in the new constitution. It was decided in December that the Electoral Assemblies were to be composed without any regard to rank. Thus the nobles retained nothing but their titles. Next, it was decided, in June, 1790, to suppress titles, and rightly so. We have seen in history untitled nobilities with power: but a titled nobility without legal privileges or political existence would be an absurdity. When titles went with office, and office was hereditary, as in Gothic Europe, hereditary titles were intelligible. But the existence of an hereditary nobility is certainly not essential to a state. A peculiarity of Gothic Europe is not to be erected into a universal law of politics—"Nobility is the Corinthian capital of polished states":—the august fabric of society is deformed and encumbered by such Gothic ornaments. The massy Doric that sustains it is Labour: and the splendid variety of arts and talents that solace and embellish life forms the decoration of its Corinthian and Ionic capitals. Besides, the French saw that, if life was to be breathed into the forms of free government, it was necessary to create a democratic character and democratic ideas. The destruction of titles, therefore, was the first step towards real equality. It was a blow at haughty pride on the one hand, and slavish deference on the other. Any moral value which titles may have, considered as rewards of merit, disappears when they are made hereditary." In the many passages in which Burke speaks in praise of an order of nobility he wishes to remind the nobles of England of their position and duties. In 1772 he wrote to the Earl of Richmond, "You people of great families and hereditary trusts and fortunes are not like such as I am ... We are but annual plants that perish with our season, and leave no sort of traces behind us. You, if you are what you ought to be, are in my eye the great oaks that shade a country, and perpetuate your benefits from generation to generation. The immediate power of a Duke of Richmond, or a Marquis of Rockingham, is not of so much moment: but if their conduct and example hand down their principles to their successors,



then their houses become the public repositories and office of record for the constitution... I do not look upon your time and lives as lost if... the heads of certain families should make it their business by the whole course of their lives, principally by their example, to mould into the very vital stamina of their descendants those principles which ought to be transmitted pure and unmixed to posterity."

Pp. 156-183. *The clergy did not deserve the treatment which they have received. The offences of priests in former days are unjustly made a pretext for punishing the priests of to-day. Evil men have used religion, as they have used other good things, as a cloak for their evil passions. But History, properly understood, should teach us, not to destroy the good which has been used as a cloak to cover evil, but to find the evil under the pretext, and root out it. For the same evil passions disguise themselves in different forms and work by different instruments, at different times. Intolerance, assuming the name of toleration, is now incarnate in the atheists, just as in former days it was incarnate, under the name of religious zeal, in the priests. The same arguments that are used to justify the punishment of the harmless priests of to-day will justify the punishment of harmless atheists in days to come. Every profession has its own weaknesses and prejudices, but these are not to be punished as vices. The French clergy of the present generation are certainly free from many of the vices with which priests were charged in former times. Among the bishops, the good have suffered along with the few vicious ones. The church, as now established, will certainly not attract men of culture and position. The clergy are henceforth to be elected. Office, therefore, will be won by those who are versed in the trickery of elections. There is no court to determine doctrines or punish heresy. This degradation of religion is but preparatory to its total abolition, and to the substitution of a secular for a religious education. Englishmen will not approve the confiscation because those who suffer by it are Catholics. They respect the religious convictions of others, but they have had to suffer for their own. Englishmen, with their ancient sense of justice and respect for social order, are horror-stricken at the contempt which the French have shown for every recognized title to property. It is matter for alarm that the French are striving to propagate their doctrines in other countries, and that, even in England, some have been found to approve them. In days like these, when public debts are growing so rapidly, it is a terrible thing that governments or individuals should be familiarized with the idea that the robbery of any one is, under any circumstances, justifiable.*

*It is futile to say that the French, in destroying the church, merely effected a wise reform. It is never wise to be unjust: and the law is unjust when it disappoints expectations that it has itself created. Wise reformers know that institutions are like natural forces. They may be used, but they cannot be created at will. A wise reformer would have seen in the church a powerful instrument for good, to be controlled, employed, and directed, not to be wantonly destroyed. He would have made allowance for inevitable superstition. He would have seen in revolutionary fanaticism itself a superstition much worse than that of the church. There is no reason to suppose that the new owners of the church lands will use their wealth with more benefit to the community than the ejected monks did. Priests are as useful as idle laymen. Their employment is as useful as many employments, which we are obliged to tolerate, because the poor can only live by producing what the rich are willing to pay for. The church employed as much labour as any one else would have employed, and it employed it on worthier objects. If there were any abuses, they might and should have been corrected. It cannot be regarded as an evil that a portion of a nation's land should be devoted to the encouragement of good works, and to the reward of merit wherever it is to be found.*

P. 156, l. 4. not with much credulity, i.e. it is with great incredulity.

¶ l. 11. in the individuals, Burke skilfully diverts attention from the political and social objections to the church as an endowed and a privileged corporation, to the acknowledged merits of individual priests.

l. 13. unnatural, the cruelty of it shocks the feelings which nature has implanted in man. Cf. p. 164, l. 4.

l. 14. meliorating, cf. p. 5, l. 2. The church should have been reformed and controlled.

l. 17. act as trumpeters, give the signal for attack upon the property of the church. He has already described how the atheistical men of letters joined with the lower orders in an attack on the church. See pp. 123-4.

l. 22. malignant and profligate, they read history with a malicious and wicked desire to find instances of crimes committed by priests.

l. 25. illogical, he explains below that it is unreasonable to punish the members of a corporation in one generation for what the corporation has done in the past.

l. 27. After destroying, He refers to the abolition by the Assembly of titles of nobility.

l. 30. the fiction of ancestry, it is only by a metaphor that the priests of the past can be called the ancestors of the priests of to-day. And, if it is unfair to punish a son for the offences of his father, much more unfair is it to punish an official for the offences of his predecessor.

l. 32. except in names, except that they are called by the same name and belong to the same class—viz. priests—as those who committed the guilty acts.

l. 33. refinement, subtlety. The atheists have shown great cleverness in discovering ways of being unjust, or pretexts for being unjust, which would not have occurred to ordinary men.

l. 34. The word enlightened is, of course, ironical.

P. 157, l. 2. that sense, viz. this feeling of abhorrence.

l. 8. inexpiable war, cf. p. 98, l. 6.

l. 19. We do not draw, It is worth noticing how easily and naturally Burke slides into general reflections. Facts were of no interest to him except as they illustrated great principles, or afforded material for important lessons. That is why he is so instructive.

l. 24. in the perversion, if it is misunderstood and misapplied. a magazine, cf. p. 129, l. 19.

l. 26. keeping alive, etc., it will do this, for instance, if, because priests have once done wrong, popular fury may be excited against priests for all time.

l. 28. History, etc., cf. Gibbon's definition of History as "little more than the register of the crimes, follies, and misfortunes of mankind."

l. 34. The private state, the condition of the individual. The quotation is from Spenser, *Faery Queene*, ii. 7. 14.

P. 158, l. 2. You would not, etc., tyranny justifies itself as a legal exercise of prerogative, or as a due maintenance of authority. Sedition justifies itself as zeal for freedom and human rights. We are not to attack or depreciate either rightful authority or a just spirit of independence. These are good in themselves, and, even when they have been destroyed, tyranny and sedition will cloak themselves under other names. What we ought to attack is the pride which animates the tyrant and the ambition which animates the rebel.

l. 9. captains, military leaders.

l. 17. the occasional organs, etc., in the sixteenth century the 'cause of evil' was intolerance: the 'organ by which it acted' was the Catholic priesthood: the 'transitory mode in which it appeared' or 'the fashion' of it was the persecution of Protestants. In the eighteenth century the same evil spirit of

intolerance manifested itself in the persecution of the Catholic priesthood by atheists.

l. 19. **Otherwise**, etc., you will know a great many facts, but your knowledge will not prevent you from doing foolish actions. It is foolish to argue that because priests once persecuted, they must be persecuted now.

l. 23. **assumes a new body**, enters into and animates different men : *e.g.* intolerance is now incarnate in the atheists.

l. 23. **gibbeting the carcass**, etc., a man from whom the spirit of evil has fled is compared to a body from which the spirit of life has departed. He is compared to a tomb because the evil spirit is dead in him.

l. 31. **attending only**, etc., *i.e.* seeing only what is on the surface : seeing only the facts, and not the lessons which they teach.

l. 35. **perhaps in worse**, the persecution then being carried on by the atheists was more odious than any of which priests had ever been guilty.

P. 159, l. 2. **followers of Calvin**, the Huguenots. Calvin was a Protestant reformer of the sixteenth century. See on p. 93, l. 1.

l. 5. **abominations**, see on p. 79, l. 25.

l. 24. **seasoning**, lit. something used to give a relish to food.

l. 25. **the Guises**, those who persecute in the eighteenth century as the Guises did in the sixteenth. See on p. 53, l. 11.

l. 28. **gallies**, see on p. 8, l. 18.

l. 29. **house of correction, prison**.

l. 32. **prostituted**, unworthily employed to make religion appear odious. See on p. 41, l. 14.

l. 35. **only by his alms**, see note on p. 94, l. 17.

P. 160, l. 1. **truly**, see note on p. 91, l. 27.

l. 4. **every other part of learning**, Burke contends throughout that the practice of the revolutionists rested on a spurious philosophy.

l. 6. **elevation of reason**, just as a man, who wishes to get a general view of the country, must take his stand on rising ground, so a man must rise above particular facts and events if he wishes to apprehend the general lessons which history teaches. Bacon describes Plato as "one that had a wit of elevation situate as upon a cliff."—*Adv.* 2. vii. 5.

l. 18. **speculative and inactive**, who are by conviction atheists, but do not try to force their doctrines on the world, or to persecute those who disagree with them.

l. 21. in its quiescent state, etc., a man must be miserable from the mere fact that he does not believe in a God.

l. 30. professional faults, etc., what these are, in the case of clergymen, is explained on p. 161, ll. 2 *seqq.* "some tenaciousness... deride them." The student should notice the passages in which Burke insists that wisdom shows itself in not expecting too much from men. Cf. p. 164, l. 19, and p. 178, l. 30.

l. 32. countenance, justify.

P. 161, l. 9. a violence of toleration, etc., true toleration does not require us to punish men simply because they are zealous for their own religion. He is, in reality, the most intolerant of men who cannot make allowance for such natural zeal.

l. 15. of a just allowance, i.e. frailties which we ought, in fairness, to excuse.

l. 17. monsters, see on p. 75, l. 22.

l. 20. conflicting interests, he alludes to the struggle of the Catholic church with the Huguenots.

l. 22. meliorate, cf. p. 5, l. 2.

l. 31. rigidly screwing, etc., it may be inequitable for a man to insist on something to which, according to the letter of the law, he has a perfect right. For instance, we should think it hard if a landlord insisted on the punctual payment of his rent in years of famine and distress.

l. 36. intellectual sovereignty, controlling the beliefs of men. Cf. "an empire of doctrine," p. 162, l. 4.

P. 162, l. 4. sometimes flattering, etc., there have been times when the church has impugned the absolute authority of the secular power. The priests have 'flattered' men by telling them that they were only bound to obey an authority which they had themselves consented to obey. There have been cases too in which, by threats of penalties both in this world and the next, the church has compelled men to refuse obedience to governments. But in either case its object was to substitute its own authority for the authority which it attacked.

l. 11. two great parties, Catholics and Protestants.

l. 25. one set of men, the free thinkers.

l. 31. The regulars are those who do, and the seculars those who do not belong to some monastic order.

l. 33. parochial clergy, the priests in charge of a parish. See on p. 50, l. 17.

P. 163, l. 1. of noble birth, that the highest offices in the church were reserved for members of noble families was one of the grievances of the time.

l. 8. neither insolent nor servile, Bacon gives the same test of good manners. "The sum of behaviour is to retain a man's own dignity, without intruding upon the liberty of others."

l. 11. Fénelon, 1651-1715. Louis XIV. made him tutor to his grandson the Duke of Burgundy, and afterwards made him Archbishop of Cambray. Through the instrumentality of his contemporary, the great theological controversialist, Bossuet, one of his theological treatises was formally condemned by the church, and he lost favour with the king through the boldness of the political theories contained in his *Telemachus*. He was remarkable for his charm of character and manner, the liberality of his ideas on education and government, the piety of his life, and the extent of his charities.

l. 19. vicars-general, deputies.

l. 24. divines, theologians.

l. 32. by all titles, on every ground. Cf. p. 21, l. 4.

P. 164, l. 14. heroic, see on p. 73, l. 24. The term 'heroic virtue' is used by Aristotle (*Ethics*, vii. 1) to describe virtue which transcends the human.

l. 19. as old as I am, i.e. with my experience.

l. 20. description, class.

l. 28. the severe virtues, those which imply self-control. They made up for their intemperance by being liberal-minded and generous.

P. 165, l. 1. to favour the vicious, those who are punished alike are, presumably, equally culpable.

l. 3. pensionary establishment, see on p. 112, l. 20. The proposals of the ecclesiastical committee with reference to the new church establishment were first laid before the Assembly in April. The nation was to take upon itself the debts of the clergy, and defray the costs of the church from the taxes. For the present the existing dignitaries of the church were to remain as before, but their revenues were to be so much curtailed that the church would cost 133 instead of 170 millions. But as this sum was still too large, it was proposed that in future the church should be arranged on an entirely new system, so that 65 millions (afterwards raised to 77 millions) would suffice for its maintenance. The old dioceses were to be done away with; every department was to form a bishopric—every half square league a parish—and the parish priests were to be better paid than before. On the 29th of May the new church constitution—the outlines of which, as first sketched, are given above—was laid before the Assembly. In its full development it went far beyond the principles laid down in the report of April; and made many other encroachments on the laws of the church than the alteration of the bound-

aries of dioceses. The sovereignty of the enfranchised citizens was acknowledged in this case, as in the courts of law, and in the general administration. The electors of each district were to name their priest, and the electors of the department their bishop. The only condition of the franchise was attendance at one mass. Every non-Catholic who fulfilled it might give a vote. The person elected was to swear an oath of allegiance to the nation, the king, and the constitution. There were to be no more chapters, and no more ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The Pope was to forfeit his right of dispensation and canonical investiture."—*Von Sybel*, bk. i. ch. 5, and bk. ii. ch. 3. Burke says that no man, possessed of any self-respect, or occupying a respectable position, will allow his son to become a candidate for a place which can only be won by acts of which a respectable man would be ashamed, and which is not respectable even when it is attained.

l. 11. **patrons**, those who possessed the right of appointing to benefices. Cf. "kingly and seignoral patronage," p. 166, l. 27.

l. 14. **to independence**, those who have been elected will flatter and try to please those who have elected them, and may still elect them to something better.

l. 19. **an exciseman**, a collector of excise duties. See on p. 133, l. 29.

l. 25. **ascertained, fixed**.

P. 166, l. 3. **philosophical**, see on p. 99, l. 20.

l. 9. **education**, referring especially to the teaching of Helvetius. See note on p. 96, l. 2.

l. 27. **patronage**, see on p. 165, l. 11.

l. 31. **on and through greater numbers**, there will be more candidates to flatter, and more electors to be flattered. It is bad enough that a priest should occasionally get a benefice by flattering the king or lord in whose gift it lies. But it is much worse that no priest should be able to get promotion without flattering the masses whom he ought to instruct and control.

P. 167, l. 7. **the foundation**, viz. the belief in God.

l. 9. **Burnet** (1643-1715) was Bishop of Salisbury. The reference is to Bk. iii. of his *History of His Own Times*.

l. 11. **of the finest parts**, of the greatest ability.

l. 17. **a form of religion**, viz. Protestantism. The church preferred atheists who called themselves Catholics to sincere Protestants. It is no wonder that the church has been destroyed by the atheists whom it welcomed into its fold.

l. 21. **a similar spirit**, viz. bigotry pushed to the extent that he has just described.

l. 24. **doctors**, used in its literal sense of 'teachers.'

l. 31. **stock of general truth**, if they were ready to die for the doctrines peculiar to Protestantism, much more would they have been willing to suffer for those truths which all churches hold in common.

l. 34. **titles**, cf. p. 163, l. 32.

P. 168, l. 4. **less engaged in conflict**, cf. p. 101, l. 14 *seqq.*

l. 13. **Equal neglect**, etc., The meaning of the passage is this: True toleration does not consist in abstaining from attacking what we consider too contemptible to be worth attacking. It consists in allowing to others what we claim for ourselves, namely, the right of exercising an independent judgment.

l. 19. **They favour**, etc., they prefer one dogma to another and they allow others to do the same.

l. 21. **justice**, justice consists, partly at least, in allowing to others whatever we expect others to allow to us.

l. 25. **we**, i.e. all believers. The contest is really between religion and atheism.

l. 28. **subdivision**, Christians are regarded as forming one corps, of which the different churches are so many subdivisions. The attack of the atheists on the one class called Catholics is really an attack on the whole corps.

l. 34. **good works**, a theological term for the virtuous acts which are the expression of a true religious faith.

ll. 35, 6. **fellowship ... communion**, the words are probably suggested by a passage in the English Prayer-book, beginning, "O almighty God, who hast knit together thine elect in one *communion and fellowship* in the mystical body of thy Son Christ our Lord," etc.

P. 169, l. 2. **proscription**, see on p. 117, l. 24.

l. 6. **deans and chapters**, the dean is the chief clergyman of a cathedral church. The clergymen associated with him are called canons. The dean and canons together form the chapter. For the "parochial clergy" see on p. 162, l. 33.

l. 12. **as a precedent in point**, as an example which England can imitate.

l. 20. **the common concern**, etc., in which all alike are interested. If once a right is violated, no man can feel secure in the possession of his rights.

ll. 21-23. **possession ... law .. usage .. prescription**, cf. p. 94, l. 13, and p. 119, l. 3. For the meaning of 'law of nature' see on p. 106, l. 22.

P. 170, l. 1. **hardly with the compliment**, they hardly think it worth while to discuss the lawfulness of robbing a man. A man's claim to his own is a trifle not worth consideration.



l. 11. They have compelled, see p. 136, l. 11.

l. 14. the symbols, the paper money, which represents the anticipated profits of the sale of the lands of which they have robbed the church.

l. 16. liberty or property, on p. 137, l. 8, he called the compulsory paper currency "an outrage on property and liberty."

l. 19. constructive property, *i.e.* not a definite tangible thing, but a valuable right. To the examples quoted by Burke we may add copyright and patents as instances of incorporeal property. Burke uses the word *constructive*, as opposed to *natural*, to denote whatever owes its existence to convention or positive law. On p. 185, l. 5, Burke says that "near divisions carry only the *constructive* authority of the whole": *i.e.* it is a mere fiction of law which makes the vote of the majority the vote of the whole body. Cf. "We are so little affected by things which are habitual, that we consider the idea of the decision of a majority as if it were a law of our original nature. But such constructive whole, residing in a part only, is one of the most violent fictions of positive law, that ever has been or can be made on the principles of artificial incorporation. Out of civil society nature knows nothing of it; nor are men, even when arranged according to civil order, otherwise than by very long training, brought to submit to it. ... This mode of decision, when wills may be so nearly equal, when, according to circumstances, the smaller number may be the stronger force, and when apparent reason may be all upon one side, and on the other little else than impetuous appetite; all this must be the result of a very particular and special convention, confirmed afterwards by long habits of convenience, by a sort of discipline in society, and by a strong hand, vested with stationary permanent power, to enforce this sort of constructive general will."—*Appeal to the Old Whigs*. With regard to good-will, when a man is leaving a business, he sometimes receives a sum of money from his successor on the understanding that he will induce his old customers to deal with the new comer. Burke purposely selects instances of rights of small value to emphasize the respect which Englishmen have for property as such.

l. 28. real and recognized, etc., cf. p. 43, l. 1.

P. 171, l. 3. those instruments, etc., viz. money, by means of which alone property can circulate, *i.e.* pass from hand to hand. Cf. p. 122, l. 5.

l. 5. the Anabaptists, This sect carried to extreme lengths the principles of the independence of the individual judgment and the importance of individual conviction. They came into conflict with the constituted authorities in Germany through their

attempt to establish an ideal Christian commonwealth, with absolute equality and community of goods.

l. 7. **wild, extravagant; impracticable.** Burke has already said, on p. 116, that, in the changed circumstances of the world, the Bible is to be interpreted according to the spirit, and not according to the letter.

l. 10. **epidemical fanaticism,** when a fit of madness seizes a whole people wisdom is terrified, because wisdom is powerless where men will not listen to reason.

l. 18. **which supersedes, etc.,** to emphasize their hatred of religion they are willing both to endure and inflict sufferings which outrage the natural instincts of humanity.

l. 23. **proselytism,** See on p. 124, l. 1.

P. 172, l. 9. **malignant charity,** their desire to share with others their pernicious doctrines.

l. 15. **tokens of confraternity,** "Two of the members of the Patriotic Society at Nantes had been despatched to the Revolution Society, to deliver to them the picture of a banner used in the festival of the former society in the month of August bearing the motto 'Pacte Universel' (universal compact), and a representation of the flags of England and France bound together with a ribbon on which was written, "A l'union de la France et d'Angleterre" (To the union of England and France). The messengers were respectfully received and entertained by the committee of the society. These facts were submitted to the society in the report of the committee presented at the meeting of November 4, 1790."—Payne.

l. 19. **the federative capacity, i.e.** the duty of acting for the kingdom as a whole. The power alluded to is the English Parliament. The words federal and federation are from the Latin words, *fides*, faith, and *fœdus*, a treaty. A federation is a union of states. A federal government is one which controls in matters that concern all the states that compose a confederation, as opposed to a local government which may exist in each state, and control affairs which concern that state alone. The most conspicuous instance of a federation is the United States of America.

P. 173, l. 8. **by interesting many, etc.,** all to whom the government owes money are anxious for the safety of the government.

P. 174, l. 4. **monied interest,** On p. 122, l. 3, Burke explained how the new French government conciliated the support of the monied interest by paying their debts out of the property stolen from the church.

l. 5. **look for their security,** trust for the payment of their debts. They expect that government will have the will as well as the power to pay.

l. 7. *effete*, incapable. The word is properly applied to a woman who is past child-bearing.

l. 8. *springs*, cf. p. 69, l. 27.

l. 11. *not from an acquisition*, i.e. not from extra wealth, legitimately acquired, but from plunder.

l. 12. *Revolutions*, etc., in times of disturbance robbery is likely to pass either unnoticed or unpunished.

l. 17. *their security*, who think they are safe because they harm nobody.

l. 21. *a hollow murmuring*, the sign of an approaching earthquake, to which in the next sentence he compares a political disturbance. Cf. p. 125, l. 13.

l. 30. *tender of property*, with a strict regard for the rights of property. Cf. p. 107, l. 6.

P. 175, l. 3. *Justice is itself*, etc., the one virtue which society should always observe is justice. One great reason which induced men to enter society was the desire to obtain that protection which in the state of nature they could not get. Society will fall to pieces if it fails to protect all or any of its members.

l. 30. *on the original introduction*, etc., it may be inexpedient to create a church in a country in which one does not exist, though it may be inexpedient to destroy one which already exists.

l. 33. *things more valuable*, etc., for instance people may have so far associated religion with the church, that religion may lose its hold upon them when the church is destroyed. No European would think of introducing a system of caste into a country. But no wise European would wish at one stroke to abolish it in India, because, in the minds of the people, it is bound up with religion, it is the source of moral obligation, and it defines the moral code. To destroy it, therefore, would be equivalent to depriving morality of its only sanction. Montesquieu, discussing the enormous revenues of the clergy, made the same remark—"The laws sometimes find hindrances to the removal of existing abuses, because they are bound up with things which the laws ought to respect."—*Esprit des Lois*, bk. xxv. ch. 5.

P. 176, l. 1. *sophisters*. See on p. 28, l. 20. It is not a question of maintaining it with all its abuses or destroying it altogether. There is a *middle*, i.e. a course halfway between these two extremes, namely, to reform it.

l. 5. *Spartam*, etc., make the best of what you have got. The Greek passage of which this is meant to be a translation means really, "You have got Sparta, rule it," i.e. mind your own business. The mistranslation arose from the fact that the Greek word *kosmeo* means both *to rule* and *to adorn*.

l. 10. *carte blanche*, etc., no man, who is sincerely anxious for his

country's good, will think himself at liberty to change the whole face of it according to his caprices.

l. 12. **speculative**, opposed to practical, as on p. 160, l. 18.

l. 15. **A disposition**, see on p. 111, l. 34: and cf. p. 189, l. 7.

l. 25. **a purchase**, what for instance the fulcrum is to the lever. A man with a lever in his hand must get a fulcrum before he can lift a weight. So a statesman authorized to make changes is powerless without funds and agents.

l. 26. **the mechanism**, the word is suggested by the preceding analogy. Government might have found in the monasteries a convenient instrument for carrying out its benevolent projects.

l. 29. **with a public direction**, which the state could control. Cf. p. 116, l. 13.

l. 31. **public ties**, being unmarried they had no domestic ties or interests.

l. 34. **whose avarice**, etc., poverty, chastity, and obedience were the three monastic vows. Whatever wealth a monk obtained he handed over to the order to which he belonged. A statesman could hardly wish for more than large funds, and honest, unselfish, obedient agents.

P. 177, l. 2. **The winds blow**, etc., a quotation from the Bible. You can no more create such institutions when you want them than you can make a particular wind blow. The devotion of wealthy Christians in days gone by led them to endow monasteries: the statesmen of to-day must show their wisdom in the use which they make of those endowments.

l. 5. **The perennial existence**, etc., A man often feels that whatever good he may plan or effect must cease with his death. The difficulty disappears if he can make an undying corporation the instrument of his reform.

l. 6. **are**, Burke often uses the plural in cases like this; when the verb, though it has a singular subject, is immediately preceded by nouns in the plural.

l. 17. **contriving**, ingenious.

l. 18. **wild**, without cultivation. **rank**, luxuriant. The products of spontaneous zeal are compared to flowers growing wild.

l. 27. **until contemplative ability**, etc., i.e. until men discovered their laws and turned them to practical use.

l. 28. **practic**, for practical. Similarly we have had politic, theatric, and mechanic.

l. 33. **which was neither**, etc., i.e. which you might have employed in a rational way.

l. 36. **pensioners**, cf. p. 112, l. 20.

P. 178, l. 2. **mental funds**, wisdom.

l. 3. in **its** natural course, what we should have expected.  
See on p. 10, l. 26. From men without wisdom we cannot expect wise courses.

l. 6. **But**, Burke proceeds to answer an imaginary objector.

l. 11. **You derive benefits**, etc., Many passions, which considered in the abstract are culpable, may yet assume a desirable form, or serve a useful purpose. Self-love, for instance, is the root of prudence. Resentment serves to check injustice. Cf. p. 155, l. 8: and see Pope's *Essay on Man*, ii. 183.

l. 13. **superstition**, see on p. 75, l. 29. So long as there are people who cannot understand what **it** is that is deserving of reverence, or on what grounds reverence is due, so long there will be superstition. A wise man will recognize this. He will distinguish between the substance and the accidents of religion: and so long as he sees that men are faithful to the substance, he will tolerate some folly in respect of the accidents. If we see a simple Hindu, fearing God, and trying to live an upright life, we are not to censure him because he insists on eating, bathing, etc., at certain times and in certain ways. These are the accidents of *his* religion: and though they are different from, they are not necessarily more ridiculous than those of other religions. Christians are still fighting as to the robes which a priest should wear, and the position in which he should stand in church. A wise man can see that it cannot matter in what clothes or in what position a man worships God. 'The rival follies' fight with one another: e.g. Hindus and Christians each are ready to fasten on the weak points in the religion of the other. But 'wisdom is not so severe a corrector of folly.' In other words, The wise man, who knows what human nature is and what is to be expected from it, will make allowance for inevitable follies.

l. 28. **are not admirers**, etc., the reference is to the Roman poet Horace, who begins a letter to Numicius thus—

Not to admire, Numicius, is the best,  
The only way, to make and keep men blest.

The meaning is that a wise man will never allow himself to be so engrossed by the *Munera Terræ* as to sacrifice his own peace of mind. In the original, *Munera Terræ* is used in its literal sense, 'what the Earth affords.' Burke uses it more generally to signify what is accidental, temporary, and changeable. It applies, for instance, to the elements which superstition has added to religion. Horace's epistle has been imitated by Pope: *Globe Edition*, p. 300.

l. 35. **if, in the contention**, etc., as Bacon says, "there is a superstition in avoiding superstition. when men think to do best if they go farthest from the superstition formerly received."

P. 179, l. 1. heats, passions. Cf. p. 101, l. 15. Monasticism is not of the essence of religion and, therefore, is not a thing to be fought about. Viewed impartially, the zeal of its founders is better than that of its present enemies.

l. 6. adorns a country, on p. 110, l. 12, he calls religion "the public ornament."

l. 18. policy, i.e. 'the public benefit to be expected from it': p. 175, l. 25.

l. 20. something more, etc., The produce raised from land is more than enough to pay the cost of raising it. The surplus, arising as it does from the natural fertility of the land, goes to the owner of the land. It is called rent. The owner of the land does not himself labour: but 'his idleness is the spring of labour,' i.e. he causes labourers to be employed. The rent which he receives is a fund which he pays away in wages.

l. 25. The only concern, etc., All that the state cares about is, that the money obtained by the sale of the surplus produce which the industry of labourers has raised from the soil should be paid away again as wages to labourers: and that the labourers should be employed upon objects which will neither corrupt themselves nor their employers. The French school of economists known as *physiocrates* maintained that the landed proprietors and the cultivators of the soil are the only productive classes in a community. Manufacturers and traders they regarded as unproductive classes, because, whilst they are making and selling a thing, they consume as much as the thing which they make or sell is worth. A man, who makes a piece of lace worth £10, consumes £10 worth of food while making it. He, therefore, adds nothing to the total wealth of the country. He only benefits the country indirectly by supplying the wants of those who are engaged in cultivating land, and by furnishing the country with products which have a value in foreign markets. The cultivator, on the other hand, always produces more than he consumes: for, as we have seen, he has a surplus at the end of each year which he can pay away as rent. The reasoning is fallacious. The value of a manufactured article is evidently greater than that of the raw material of which it is made. If a man consumes £10 worth of food while manufacturing £10 worth of cotton into lace, yet the lace when it is made is worth more than £10.

P. 180, l. 3. more laborious, etc. The reader should note these points carefully, because Burke takes pains to show that on each head the monks are better than those who are to take their places. less disposed, etc., cf. p. 137, ll. 31 *seqq.*

l. 10. canons. See on p. 169, l. 6. commendatory abbots, See on p. 123, l. 7.

l. 13. neither sing nor say, i.e. do nothing at all. In the

language of political economy 'productive labour' is labour which produces a useful thing, or which gives utility to a thing. For instance, a carpenter who fashions wood into the shape of a table is a productive labourer. The table is a useful thing, i.e. men are willing to give something for it. The labour of a priest or an opera-singer is unproductive: it does not result in the production of a vendible commodity. On purely economic grounds, therefore, there is no distinction between a monk, a singer, and a man who does nothing at all. They all consume wealth and have nothing to show for it. From an economical point of view, if money is wasted, it does not matter who wastes it. But the labour of a monk is not, in the economical sense of the term, as useful as that of factory hands. It may be very undesirable on moral and humanitarian grounds that men should have to work in mines and factories, but their labour is productive labour. The condition of the factory hands was attracting attention when Burke wrote.

l. 18. *economy, system.* The word means literally, the management of a house, and so, generally, disposition, plan, arrangement, system.

l. 21. *wheel of circulation*, the process by which money passes from hand to hand. The meaning of the passage is this. 'The surplus product of the soil' goes at first into the hands of the owner of land. He spends it in the supply of his own wants, and the gratification of his own desires. In other words he pays it away in wages. Thus the money in a kingdom circulates from rich to poor. But so long as the rich man wants what can only be made in factories, so long men must work in factories or starve. For the rich will not pay wages to men who will not make what they want. In this way the caprices and the luxuries of the rich inevitably determine the form and direction of a country's industry.

l. 33. *for this purpose of distribution, etc.*, the monks spend their money just as much as laymen do, and probably what they want can be produced with less detriment to the labourers whom they employ.

P. 181, l. 1. *on a par, equal.* Why substitute laymen for monks, when nothing will be gained by the change? The next argument is that the change would be for the worse.

l. 8. *Why should the expenditure, etc.* Burke assumes throughout that the church had spent the money well, and that lay proprietors would spend it badly.

l. 22. *open the avenues to science?* prepare the way for the growth of science. There must be curiosity before there can be inquiry. A museum stimulates curiosity by showing men what

marvels there are in nature. It facilitates inquiry by disposing the materials in the manner most convenient to the inquirer.

l. 24. **the inconstant sport**, Burke means that the revenues of the church are devoted continuously and systematically to these objects. If these revenues are handed over to individuals, there may now and then arise a man who will spend his money as the church used to spend it. But for the most part the money will be wasted on personal whims and indulgences.

l. 26. **Does not, etc.** This is a fresh argument. The monks give more innocent occupation to labourers than laymen would. As has been already explained, the wages of artisans are paid out of the surplus product of the soil: and so, Burke says, artisans labour in order to share in the fruits of the labour of those who till the soil.

l. 30. **painted, gaudy, booths**, the word is used generally for any temporary erection. *Mandap* is the nearest equivalent.

l. 31. The word **sty** means properly an enclosure for pigs: and so naturally a place devoted to the indulgence of bestial passions.

l. 34. **opera-houses**, an opera is a play in which the parts are sung instead of spoken.

l. 35. **obelisks**, a Greek word signifying a thin pointed pillar. Burke means, generally, 'in ornamenting the city of Paris.'

l. 36. The **Champ-de-Mars** (Field of Mars) is an open space in the city of Paris. The name is borrowed from the *Campus Martius* in ancient Rome.

P. 182, l. 3. **construing**, lit. interpreting, *i.e.* regarding them, cf. p. 15, l. 27, and p. 25, l. 20.

l. 8. The expression **petites maisons** (lit. little houses) in French means houses which are kept up and furnished by men for their mistresses: and **petits soupers** (lit. little suppers) are the entertainments given in them.

l. 9. **the burthen**, they have more than they want or know what to do with.

l. 13. **require that toleration**, the existence of private property involves the right of the owner to dispose of it as he pleases. But if we allow men to use it badly, why should we punish them for using it well? Why should we force men who are using property well to surrender it to those who will use it badly?

l. 21. **sole**, consisting of one. The sovereign of a country is a corporation sole. The office, with all its obligations and privileges, is a permanent one.

l. 31. **canons and commendatory abbots**, see on p. 123, l. 7, and p. 169, l. 6.



l. 33. **philosophic**, see on p. 138, l. 5.

l. 34. **positive or comparative evil**, it is not a bad thing in itself to associate office with the possession of land: nor is there any office with which it would be better connected than with the priestly office. It must be remembered that the offices of the church are not open to all citizens, but only to those who are members of the church. Practically, too, in France, the noble families monopolized the most lucrative offices.

P. 183, l. 21. **mortmain**, see on p. 36, l. 32. Property left to corporations in mortmain was inalienable. One objection to this mode of bequest was that it was an obstacle to 'the general circulation of property,' p. 122, l. 5. Another objection to it was that lands so held by corporations were not liable to the dues which individual holders of land had to pay on various occasions, such as alienation and succession. Mackintosh's criticism on this argument is as follows:—"The doctrine that church property was national property was not an invention of the Jacobins, as Burke insinuates. It had been maintained in the *Encyclopædia* by a man so eminent as Turgot. The lands occupied by the church are not the property of its members. The clergy are paid servants of the state, which has set aside certain lands as security for their salaries. If it chooses to make a fresh arrangement and pay their salaries in a different way, it has a perfect right to do so. Owners of what is really private property can do what they like with it. For instance, they can, if they please, alienate it. It would have been seen to be absurd if the French church had claimed any such power. It is allowed that no single priest is a proprietor: it follows that all the priests together have no collective right of property. They are simply entrusted with the administration of the lands from which their salaries are paid. That in all legal documents and proceedings their salaries are treated with the formalities of real property is true. But this is merely an instance of a common legal fiction. Those who administer estates must protect them in all actions at law: and the simplest mode of enabling them to appear in a cause about property is to represent them as the owners of the property. Burke's argument from prescription is irrelevant. If the above arguments are valid, rights of property have never been exercised by the church, and prescription cannot sanction what has never existed. The Treaty of Westphalia is an example of the secularization of benefices with the approval of the first Catholic powers in Europe. When Episcopacy was abolished in Scotland at the Revolution, the revenues of the church devolved peacefully on the sovereign, and he devoted a portion of them to the support of the new establishment. Wherever the society of the Jesuits was suppressed, their wealth was seized by the sovereign. Calonne him-

self had even lent his agency to such treatment of the Jesuits in France. In all these cases it was recognized to be a matter simply of the resumption by the state of the salaries of a class of public servants, when it ceased to deem their service, or the mode of it, useful. Burke was quite right in saying that existing incumbents have a right to generous treatment. But that is quite a different thing from the inviolability of church property, and the confusion of the two points is a malicious sophistry. Public exigencies may have reduced the Assembly to the necessity of inflicting some hardships on individuals; but this is a calamity to which all public servants know that they will have to submit. At any rate, it cannot outweigh the advantages of the downfall of a great corporation which was the implacable enemy of freedom, of the conversion of an immense public property to the national use, and the reduction of a servile and imperious priesthood to humble utility. History shows the church to be the foe of freedom and of reason. Those who blame France for dissolving it might just as well maintain that in her conquests over despotism she ought to have spared the strongest fortresses and most faithful troops of her adversary: for such in truth were the corporations of the nobility and the church. The character of individual nobles and priests has of course nothing to do with the question, though Burke makes it the ground of his apology for nobility and priesthood."

The remarks of Hallam on the parallel case of the suppression of the monasteries by Henry VIII. are worthy of notice. The suppression was a good because it put an end to the evils incident to the possession of large estates by corporations in mortmain. Under ecclesiastical management the lands did not yield as much as they should have done. Monasteries were endowed very unequally. Some were very rich, and others very poor. The monks were idle, useless, and sometimes immoral. As the monasteries were scattered about the kingdom, they were very inadequate instruments for affording relief to the poor wherever it was wanted. Their charity was indiscriminating and productive of improvidence. The suppression might perhaps have been carried out with more tenderness to the sufferers, but there can be no question either of its justice or of its benefit. Neither law, nor custom, nor opinion have given to any one a right to succeed the present holders of any corporate property. It has been better that these revenues should be expended, as they have been expended since the suppression, in liberal hospitality, in discerning charity, in the promotion of industry and cultivation, in the active duties or even generous amusements of life, than in maintaining a host of ignorant and inactive monks, in deceiving the populace by superstitious pageantry, or in the encouragement of idleness and mendicancy. The following words of Hallam are specially applicable to Burke

—"The love of antiquity produces a sort of fanciful illusion, and the very sight of those buildings, so magnificent in their prosperous hour, so beautiful even in their present ruin, begets a sympathy for those who founded and inhabited them. In many the violent courses of confiscation and attainder which accompanied this great revolution excite so just an indignation, that they either forget to ask whether the end might not have been reached by more laudable means, or condemn that end itself either as sacrilege, or as an atrocious violation of the rights of property." In our own day the question has been argued and decided against Burke in the disestablishment of the Irish church.

Pp. 183-193. *The Assembly, which has usurped power and made a Revolution upon new and untried principles, cannot complain if it is freely criticized. For the preservation of its own power it neglects none of the precautions which tyrants and usurpers have learnt from experience. It shows its indifference to the interests of the people and the country by leaving them utterly to chance. The errors of the present rulers of France deserve no pity, because they spring from presumptuousness. Their system is a failure, because in the construction of it they have deliberately evaded the difficulties which they encountered. Conquest of difficulties is in government, as it is in every science and in every art, a condition of success. The French have simply followed the easy course of destroying everything which they found, and putting up the exact opposite of it in its place. True statesmanship shows itself in the adaptation of old institutions to new circumstances. Political changes, affecting, as they do, the interests of whole peoples, ought to be introduced gradually and circumspectly. The statesman should feel for those whom his measures will affect. He should distrust himself. He should welcome co-operation. He should never reject advice. He should be on the watch for every opportunity of preventing, remedying, or compensating evils, so as to derive from every measure the maximum of good on the whole. He must often be content with merely initiating a policy, the full development of which will be the task of future generations. Through neglect of these plain dictates of common sense, the French have put themselves at the mercy of political quacks and adventurers. Through a perverse habit of dwelling rather on the faults than on the virtues of men and things, they have put themselves out of sympathy with mankind, and have developed a mischievous tendency to destroy everything. They have taken as serious grounds of action all the paradoxes with which men like Rousseau have tried to amuse themselves and astonish the vulgar. There is nothing in what*

*they have accomplished which justifies their bold attempt to re-construct a state.*

l. 34. qualify, modify.

P. 184, l. 1. original purpose, see p. 102, l. 6 *seqq.*

l. 12. as practically they exist, cf. p. 62, l. 8.

l. 16. ancient permanent sense, cf. p. 102, l. 28.

l. 28. I can never consider, etc., for the origin of the National Assembly see note on p. 45, l. 29.

P. 185, l. 2. ancient usage, etc., cf. p. 49, l. 30.

l. 6. constructive authority, see on p. 170, l. 19.

l. 10. anticipate the time, they would accord to it a recognition which they only give to ordinary governments after a long time.

l. 14. the child, viz. the new French government. It is confessedly legitimate to expel a tyrant by force, and to establish a better form of government.

l. 15. expediency, conduciveness to the public interest.

l. 21. sinister, immoral. Burke means that it is by the commission of crimes that the Assembly has gained its power. Cf. p. 119, l. 21.

l. 27. no common reasons, i.e. very strong reasons. This is one of the many passages in which Burke omits to notice that the Assembly could never have had any influence with or over the people, unless it had been backed by popular sympathies. Macintosh remarks truly that, "it is vain to urge, as Burke does, that according to the formal constitution of France the members of the Assembly usurped a power which was not theirs. Circumstances and the will of the people had put the future of France into their hands. The subsequent ratification of the people is the sanction of their acts, and the only sanction which was possible. The same reasoning which justifies the Revolution of 1688 will justify that of 1789. According to the letter of the law the English Convention of 1688 had no power to act as they did. Probably at the opening of the Convention the people, had they been called on, as the French were, to give instructions to the members, would not have gone the length of ordering the deposition of James. But the change of public sentiment from the opening of the Convention to its ultimate decision was as remarkable as the contrast between the decrees of the National Assembly and the first instructions of their constituents."

P. 186, l. 7. a pleader, one who draws up legal documents, the form of which, of course, is exactly prescribed. an *iota*, the name of the smallest letter in the Greek alphabet. The more common form in use is 'a jot.' It is equivalent to 'a hair's breadth.'

1. 11. **untried speculations**, I have pointed out in the Introduction that the French had been shut out from any opportunity of acquiring practical political experience. There is justice in the remark of Mackintosh that the attempt of the French to apply the destructive criticism as well as the positive results of the philosophy of the pre-Revolution period to the increase of the public welfare deserves sympathy rather than reprobation. It was impossible that things should remain as they were. The new opinions had permeated the masses, and there was an absurd inconsistency between the opinions of Frenchmen and the institutions under which they lived. The policy of the Assembly was only possible because it harmonized with the convictions and instincts of Frenchmen.

1. 25. **parental solicitude**, for a similar metaphor see on p. 107, l. 28.

1. 28. **empirics, quacks**. Literally it means 'men of experience': but it is generally opposed to those who have a scientific knowledge of a subject.

1. 31. **of considerable parts**, cf. p. 167, l. 11.

P. 187, l. 7. **disposing**, skilful in adapting means to ends.

1. 11. **masters**, cf. p. 81, l. 4.

1. 16. **Difficulty**, etc., cf. p. 41, l. 4. The quotation which follows is from Virgil, *Georgic*, i. 121.

1. 29, **tricking short-cuts**, etc., what appear to be short and easy modes of attaining our object, but in reality are not so. As Burke says on p. 190, l. 6, patience will achieve more than force.

1. 33. **republic of Paris**, see p. 54, l. 4.

1. 36. **the common fortune**, etc. Bacon quotes with approval the saying of Solomon, "The way of the slothful is as an hedge of thorns," signifying how laborious sloth proveth in the end.

P. 188, l. 11. **Your mob**, any mob you like to take. The *Quinze vingt*, mentioned in the note at the foot of the page, is a hospital for three hundred (*quinze*, 15, and *vingt*, 20) blind men in Paris. The *Petites Maisons* are madhouses.

P. 189, l. 6. **expatiate**, used in its literal sense of *wander*. Our hopes of success are limited by our experience, but, when there has been no experience, no bounds are set to men's expectations.

1. 7. **to preserve and to reform**, cf. p. 176, l. 15.

1. 14. **opposite vices**, the wise reformer has to contend with a stubborn conservatism on the one hand and a reckless radicalism on the other.

1. 30. **an unfeeling heart**, see on p. 49, l. 36.

1. 35. **It may be allowed**, etc., He may be so constituted as to see at once what his country needs. See on p. 91, l. 10.

P. 190, l. 2. **social ends**, all must work together for objects in which all are equally interested, and by which all are equally affected.

l. 18. **most promising**, from which we expect good results. With this passage cf. p. 68, l. 4 *seqq.* "The nature of man ... a favourite member."

l. 25. **in composition**, a constitution is like a machine with a very complex adjustment of parts. The following passages from the *Appeal to the Old Whigs* make Burke's meaning clear. "To be a good member of Parliament is no easy task, especially at this time, when there is so strong a disposition to run into the perilous extremes of *servile* compliance or *wild* popularity. ... We are now members for a rich commercial city: this city, however, is but a part of a rich commercial nation, the interests of which are various, *multiform*, and *intricate*. We are members for that great nation which, however, is itself but a part of a great empire. ... All these widespread interests must be considered, must be compared, must be reconciled, if possible. We are members for a free country; and surely we all know that the machine of a free constitution is no simple thing; but as *intricate*, and as *delicate*, as it is valuable. We are members in a great and ancient Monarchy; and we must preserve religiously the true legal rights of the sovereign, which form the keystone that binds together the noble and well-constructed arch of our Empire and our constitution. A constitution made up of balanced powers must ever be a critical thing." "The whole scheme of our mixed constitution is to prevent any one of its principles from being carried as far as, taken by itself, and theoretically, it would go. ... To avoid the perfections of extreme, all its several parts are so constituted, as not alone to answer their own several ends, but also each to limit and control the others: insomuch, that take which of the principles you please—you will find its operation checked and stopped at a certain point. ... From thence it results, that in the British Constitution there is a perpetual treaty and compromise going on, sometimes openly, sometimes with less observation." "The British Constitution is the result of the thoughts of many minds, in many ages. It is no simple, no superficial thing, nor to be estimated by superficial understandings. An ignorant man, who is not fool enough to meddle with his clock, is however sufficiently confident to think he can safely take to pieces, and put together at his pleasure, a moral machine of another guise, importance and complexity, composed of far other wheels, and springs, and balances, and counteracting and co-operating powers." "None except those who are profoundly studied can comprehend the elaborate contrivance of a fabric fitted to unite private and public liberty with public force, with order, with peace, with justice, and, above all, with the insti-

tutions formed for bestowing permanence and stability through ages upon this invaluable whole."

l. 34. **plastic nature**, a productive power. The word plastic is from a Greek word signifying *to mould*. Decentralization is wanted in India; but it would be absurd for government to substitute by a stroke of the pen local independence for official control on all matters and in every part of the country. It is sufficient to enunciate decentralization as an end to be kept in view, and to relax control gradually as opportunities offer.

P. 191, l. 6. **defiance of the process of nature**, an attempt to do things in impossible ways. See on p. 10, l. 26.

l. 7. **alchemist**, properly one who attempted to find a way of transmuting metals into gold. It is equivalent to a quack or pretender. For **empiric** see on p. 186, l. 28.

l. 9. **Diet**, etc., just as in the treatment of sickness a slight change of diet may be more desirable than a drastic medicine, so, in the treatment of political evils, moderate reform may be better than total change.

l. 15. **buffooneries, jests**.

l. 26. By **hating vices**, etc., we may compare the saying of Helvetius 'that in order to love men we must not expect too much of them.' Bacon remarks that "men have sought by wit to deride and traduce much of that which is good in professions, rather than with judgment to discover and sever that which is corrupt. For, as Solomon saith, He that cometh to seek after knowledge with a mind to scorn and censure, shall be sure to find matter for his humour but no matter for his instruction."

l. 28. **indisposed, disinclined**.

l. 29. **complexional, constitutional**.

l. 31. **quadrumanous, monkey-like: mischievous**.

P. 192, l. 1. **serious grounds of action**, Burke means that Rousseau had tried to astonish the world by his skill in defending such paradoxes as the superiority of the natural to the civilized state: and the tendency of learning to foster immorality. The French were not intelligent enough to distinguish between purposed satire and serious condemnation. I have shown in the Introduction that Rousseau's doctrines are not really so paradoxical as they have been represented to be. It is quite true that Rousseau would have condemned much of the action of the French. He would have condemned atheism. He states, as clearly as Burke can do, the fallacy of abstract or geometrical reasoning in politics. Diderot is said to have declared that Rousseau told him that, in his essay upon arts and culture, he took the side which he did simply with a view to acquire notoriety by his skill in defending a paradox. But it is impossible to

believe that Rousseau was not serious in what he wrote. Burke's *Letter to a Member of the National Assembly* contains a severe criticism of Rousseau.

l. 3. Cicero, in his *Oration pro L. Murena*, ch. 29, says that Cato adopted as practical maxims the following sayings of the Stoics : The wise man is never moved by favour; he never pardons a fault; no one is unhappy but the fool; a man ought not to be influenced by entreaties, or to be appeased; the wise only, though deformed, are beautiful, though in want, are rich, though enslaved, are kings; all offences are equal; every offence is a hateful crime; the wise man has a fixed opinion on everything; he repents of nothing: he is never deceived; he never changes his opinion." Such conclusions were drawn from the Stoic principle that the possession of wisdom is the sole good of man. From this point of view the objects of the passions are indifferent, and every yielding to passion is necessarily a falling away from the strict rule of reason

l. 8. *pede nudo*, etc., Horace, *Ep. i. 19*, says—

"What if a man appeared with gown cut short,  
Bare feet, grim visage, after Cato's sort?  
Would you respect him, hail him from henceforth  
The heir of Cato's mind, of Cato's worth?"

i.e. a man is not necessarily as austere and self-denying as Cato simply because, like Cato, he walks barefoot. What Burke means is that Cato accepted paradoxes as serious truths, and attempted to act upon them. His imitators were as foolish as those who put into practice the paradoxes of Rousseau. Mr. Hume, see on p. 99, l. 36.

l. 20. *strokes*, the word signifies a masterly achievement of any kind.

l. 24. *discover*, show. Though they profess to be sceptics, they are as blind followers of Rousseau as any Christian is of priest or church. Cf. p. 99, l. 5.

P. 193, l. 5. *undertakers*, used in its literal sense of those who undertake anything.

Pp. 193-223. *Burke now proceeds to consider the work accomplished by the Assembly. He deals first with the constitution of the legislature. The country is divided into eighty-three equal Departments, and members are to sit in the National Assembly as representatives of Departments. But as equal areas have not necessarily a claim to equal representation, the number of members sent by a Department is to depend upon the population of the Department, and the amount of direct taxes paid in it. The Departments are subdivided into equal Communes, and the*



*Communes into equal Cantons. The system of election is as follows. Voting begins in the Cantons. All men who pay between two and three shillings yearly in direct taxes are qualified to vote. They elect to the Commune from among the inhabitants thus qualified one deputy for every two hundred qualified inhabitants. The persons thus elected in their turn elect from among those with a still higher money qualification a certain number of deputies to the Department. And finally the deputies thus elected to the Department choose from among those who pay fifty shillings yearly in direct taxes members to the National Assembly. On this system Burke remarks (1) that though men are said to be equal, yet the poorest classes, to whom a vote is most necessary as a protection, are denied a vote altogether. A money qualification is inconsistent with the professed principles of the Assembly, and the qualification fixed is not high enough to serve as a guarantee of ability. (2) The essence of democracy is that every man shall say who is to represent him. But under this system two bodies of electors come between the masses and the representative. (3) On the principles of the Assembly, it cannot be right to give to a rich Department more members than to a poor one: and, even granting that the rich ought to have extra representation to defend them against the rapacity of the poor, they do not under this system obtain it. The rich are the minority in every Department. The members for the Department are practically chosen by the poor majority. The rich, therefore, are not represented, so that every additional member increases the majority against them. (4) The tyranny of rich Departments is not likely to be less than that of rich individuals. (5) The wealth of a Department, if measured by taxation at all, should be measured rather by indirect than by direct taxation. But it is not really fair to give to a district increased representation on account of taxes of any kind which are paid in it, for the owners of property do not necessarily live and pay taxes in the district in which their property is. (6) It is absurd to connect power with taxation before settling the system of taxation. (7) The system is not self-consistent. The deputies chosen by the Cantons to the Communes represent population. But they themselves elect representatives for an area. Now a small area may contain a larger population than a larger area, so that in the choice of deputies for the whole Department the smallest Canton may have the largest number of votes. Similarly a small Canton in a Commune may be richer than a large one, yet it will have fewer votes than the larger one in the election of those extra representatives which are given to the Department on*

the score of its wealth. (8) The aim and effect of the whole scheme is to cut up France into a number of separate states, and to reduce all individuals to one dead level of equality. No account is taken of the differences of character and capacity which separate one man from another. Except in the subjection of all the parts to a Federal Assembly no provision is made for social order, because no authority or pre-eminence has been given to those whom nature has fitted to be the leaders of society. One consequence of this must be that there will be no one to resist a despot, if ever a despot should arise. The French have themselves to blame for their difficulties. In England it is not found necessary to balance the claims of one part of the country against those of another, because all parts are subjected to a common government, which provides impartially for the interests of all. (9) The French system is faulty for another reason, namely, that as the deputies are not chosen by the people, they cannot be called to account by the people. (10) Lastly, as no deputy can sit continuously for two sessions, men have no chance of acquiring experience: and, on the other hand, there is the danger that a man's offences during one session may be forgotten by the time that he is eligible for election again.

The framers of the constitution hope that the several districts may be held together by a common interest in the redemption of the paper currency. At the most, this can only serve as long as the paper remains unredeemed: and, as the whole of it never can be redeemed, there will probably be a general struggle to obtain what property does exist. Meantime power must fall into the hands of the small body of financiers who manage the issues of paper and the sales of the church lands. The uncertainty of the value of money will make every transaction of life a speculation: and, of course, the masses of the people will be the dupes and the prey of a few clever men of business. The Assembly trust in the second place to the power of Paris to hold the other republics together. Power has become centralized in Paris, and a city has naturally a power of quick and concerted action which is impossible to the rest of the country where every possibility of combined action has been destroyed. But France will not for long submit to be ruled by Paris. The general result of the whole scheme will be to eradicate the feeling of patriotism altogether. For patriotism grows out of local attachments, and everything to which men were attached has been destroyed. There is no check upon the Assembly: and each new Assembly that sits is likely to be more revolutionary than its predecessor. Lastly there is no provision made for a permanent council or senate to represent

*the nation in its international relations, or to serve as a guarantee of continuity and consistency in its internal policy.*

P. 193, l. 9. title, right. Cf. p. 16, l. 34.

l. 17. popular, democratic. Burke argues in the following pages that the new constitution is neither democratic in principle, nor consistent with itself, nor likely to promote the happiness or well-being of the people.

l. 25. correctives, the metaphor is taken from the use of the compass in a ship. Cf. p. 194, l. 2.

l. 26. they are the results, etc., Constitutions have not, as a rule, been produced in their entirety on any definite principle. Men have created and modified their institutions gradually to satisfy their successive requirements, or to secure anticipated advantages. It is from observation and comparison of the effects of different constitutions that theorists have determined the ideal form of government.

P. 194, l. 13. an exact level, We should think that symmetry in the laying out of a garden was formal and monotonous. Beauty requires variety. The French thought otherwise: and they thought that all political arrangements too must be perfectly symmetrical.

l. 14. local and general, viz., the administrative bodies of the Departments, the municipalities of the Communes, and the National Assembly.

l. 20. regularly square, This is an exaggeration. For an account of what was really done, see note on p. 58, l. 5.

P. 195, l. 2. this organization, etc., the division and subdivision of the country is compared to the arrangement of things in series or classes by the naturalist. Departments, Communes and Cantons stand to one another as genera, species, and sub-species do. The philosopher Empedocles was born in Sicily. He lived in the fifth century. He attempted to determine the successive stages of the appearance of physical phenomena. Buffon was a very celebrated French naturalist in the eighteenth century.

l. 10. the most fallacious, etc., see note on p. 68, l. 32. When we have proved districts to be of equal area, it does not follow that they are equal in any other respects.

l. 16. contribution, see on p. 151, l. 14. It is used in the same sense throughout the argument.

l. 27. her dower, alluding to the legal dower, of a third of the husband's real property, to which a widow is entitled.—Payne.

l. 33. juridical metaphysics, abstract ideas of right. If all men, as they say, are equal, there should be no difficulty in computing the qualification for a vote.

P. 196, l. 3. But soft, etc., slightly altered from Pope, *Moral Essays*, iv. 129—

“ But soft—by regular approach—not yet.”

l. 12. **indefeasible**, cf. p. 28, l. 35.

l. 14. **local valuation**, etc., i.e. the payment yearly in direct taxes of a sum equal to the local valuation, etc.

l. 18. **answers no one purpose**, etc., a man may be rich enough to pay this small amount in the shape of taxes, yet not rich enough to be above the temptation to sell his vote. Cf. p. 197, l. 6.

l. 20. **whose natural equality**, etc., he has none of the advantages which are conferred by wealth and rank.

l. 24. **gratuitously**, for nothing.

l. 26. **come up to your market**, literally, pay the price which you ask for a vote.

l. 33. **turnpike**, literally, a toll gate.

P. 197, l. 6. **a mark**, fifty shillings.

l. 19. **it is subverted**, as he explains on the next page, no advantage is given to individual possessors of wealth.

l. 20. **it is not subverted**, etc., though rich and poor voters are placed on a par, there still remains the inequality between those who are, and those who are not rich enough to have a vote at all, as well as the inequality between rich and poor Departments.

P. 198, l. 8. **to form**, etc., i.e. to give to each city the exact amount of influence in the legislature to which its importance entitles it.

P. 199, l. 8. **aristocratic**, because given on the score of wealth. Burke means that to favour a rich district is not to favour the rich in that district.

l. 9. **the masses**, used throughout to signify the Departments as opposed to the individual inhabitants.

l. 12. **democratic principles**, because the rich and poor voters are on a par.

l. 24. **descriptions**, classes of men.

P. 200, l. 1. **has the happiness**, etc., ironical. The rich man's riches are a positive disadvantage to him.

l. 15. **become democratic**, i.e. are thrown open to anybody and everybody.

l. 18. **aristocratic**, cf. p. 199, l. 8. **in its internal relation**, in the relations of the individual voters to one another. They are all on a par.

l. 23. **equipoise**, for the metaphor cf. p. 280, l. 15. Burke was fond of this metaphor. Cf. “Our constitution stands on a nice

equipoise, with steep precipices and deep waters upon all sides of it. In removing it from a dangerous leaning towards one side, there may be risk of oversetting it on the other."—*Present Discontents*.

P. 201, l. 1. **unequal standard**, unless a man's property exists in certain easily recognizable forms, he may evade a direct tax. The owners of land and those who draw official incomes cannot of course evade a land tax or an income tax, but a merchant may easily make a false return and so evade a part of the tax. On the other hand, no purchaser of taxed goods can evade the tax upon them, since it is a part of the price. See on p. 133, l. 29.

l. 3. **discovers**, used in its literal sense of *show or bring to light*, as on p. 192, l. 24.

l. 5. **local preference**, *i.e.* giving more representatives to one Department than to another. The districts in which the largest amount of taxes is paid are not necessarily the richest districts.

l. 12. **a federative treasury**, See on p. 172, l. 19. **contingents**, See on p. 114, l. 12. If each Department were an independent state with a distinct system of taxation, then only could the wealth of each Department be measured by the amount of taxes paid in it. that, we should repeat the 'if.' Cf. p. 3, l. 16.

l. 23. **its mass**, etc., it has a proportionately large number of representatives. The customs duties are paid in the cities which export and import. But they are ultimately recovered from those who buy what is exported and imported. Thus a city obtains political advantages because of certain payments which are made in it but not by it.

P. 202, l. 6. **Perhaps**, etc., Burke means that if the people are not satisfied with the constitution, when it is completed, they may dismiss the Assembly. The Assembly, therefore, is anxious to defer the completion of it as long as possible.

l. 13. **on their taxation**, Every change in the system of taxation may add to or take from the number of representatives possessed by any Department, and may take votes from individuals in the Cantons and Communes who had them before, and give them to those who had not.

l. 22. **does not begin**, etc. The inhabitants of the Canton, who vote first, elect representatives of population. These representatives, who vote second, elect representatives of an area.

l. 34. **let us take**, etc., One populous Canton will send more representatives to the Commune than two or three sparsely populated ones. When these representatives come to elect to the Department, *i.e.* for a territorial area, they will have more votes than those of two or three other Cantons. In other words, the smaller area will be the more largely represented.

P. 203, l. 22. *Let us again, etc.*, The poorer but more populous Cantons will have more votes in the election of members for the Department than the smaller but richer ones, though the members are given on the score of the Department's wealth.

l. 34. *only ten, viz. on the basis of population: one for every two hundred.*

P. 204, l. 7. *three voices more, etc., viz. thirteen to ten.*

l. 16. *I do not see, etc.*, Burke never tires of insisting that the excellency of a constitution must be an excellency not of simplicity, but of composition. Cf. p. 68 and p. 190.

l. 19. *like wild beasts, etc.*, he has just explained that each principle is in turn sacrificed to another.

l. 23. *They have much, etc.*, The constitution presents a delusive appearance of exact symmetry and perfect proportion. But even exact symmetry and perfect proportion would not recommend it to Burke. The most irregular and unequal divisions into which a country can be broken up are the best, if they follow the lines of nature, and if the people are accustomed to them. The most extravagant disproportion between individuals and districts is justifiable if it corresponds to material differences between them. The area of a district is the least important thing about it, just as number is the least important feature of population. It is the character of men and districts with which the statesman is concerned. He must give weight to 'moral and politic' (political) considerations, i.e. to the character of men and their capacity to serve the state. Cf. p. 57, p. 60, p. 68, and p. 207.

P. 205, l. 8. *variety of republics*, Cf. p. 60, l. 13.

l. 12. *the general congress*, Burke says that the National Assembly is really a federal government. See on p. 172, l. 19.

l. 16. *associations*, they are not so much states as collections of states. States have generally united to protect themselves against external oppression.

P. 206, l. 1. *sincere friends, ironical*. The secret of the success of the Romans was that they isolated their enemies before attacking them. Mackintosh's criticism upon this part of Burke's argument is as follows—"So far from the new constitution being a dismemberment of the empire it prevented an inevitable dismemberment. France under the monarchy had been an union of provinces acquired at various times and on different conditions, and differing in constitution, laws, languages, manners, privileges, jurisdiction, and revenue. In each the king ruled by a different title, and exercised his power under different forms. These provinces were simply held together *ab extra* by the compressing force of despotism. When that force

was withdrawn, each would have resumed its independence. Thus the destruction of their provincial existence was necessary to the unity of the kingdom. Burke does not see that a unity was created, not destroyed. Formerly France had had the exterior of a simple monarchy, but it was in reality an aggregate of independent states. It is to be remembered too that the newly created bodies were too small ever to think of exercising any influence independent of the state, and that the power of each Assembly was limited by the shortness of its duration."

l. 3. colour, pretext. Cf. p. 129, l. 6.

l. 6. purposely produced, etc., he has just explained that the object was to weaken the people by destroying every possibility of combination and concerted action.

l. 11. civil habitudes, etc., they will not be accustomed to the performance of any public functions either singly or collectively.

l. 15. colonies of the rights of men, Burke gives them this name because all men in them are on an equality. There is no provision made for subordination or discipline. Cf. below, l. 23.

l. 17. Tacitus, a Roman historian, born about 54 A.D.

l. 20. coeval, they made provision for discipline at the time of founding the colony. See the passage quoted from Tacitus at the bottom of the page.

P. 207, l. 3. The facies Hippocratica, etc., it bears upon its face the symptoms of decline, from which we can foretell that it will be short-lived. The expression relates to the description given by Hippocrates, a Greek physician of the fifth century, of the symptoms of approaching death.

l. 8. no better apparatus, they knew that something more was required than a little power of generalizing and calculating. Generalization is only possible by leaving out of sight those concrete differences between individuals which are all-important to the statesman. The mathematician deals with units of equal value: the statesman does not.

l. 14. this second nature, viz. that of citizens.

l. 18. in towns or in the country, See p. 219. their several ways, etc., See p. 123, l. 12.

l. 27. description, cf. p. 199, l. 24.

l. 35. economist, See on p. 180, l. 18.

l. 36. subliming himself, etc., showing a lofty contempt for facts and details.

P. 208, l. 3. Montesquieu, *Esprit de Lois*, bk. ii. ch. 2. With this passage compare note on p. 139, l. 22. Plato and Aristotle protested strongly against the unscientific methods of distributing political power which prevailed in Greece. They insisted

that it was necessary first to get a clear idea of the end for which the state existed, then to distinguish between those who could and those who could not contribute to that end, then to assign to each man that special duty for which he was suited by nature and training, and above all so to distribute the balance of power in the state, that all should be equally safe, and equally well provided for.

l. 7. **sunk even below**, etc., they have shown an inconceivable degree of incapacity.

l. 10. **alchemistical**, See on p. 191, l. 7.

l. 14. **amalgama**, instead of the ordinary word 'mixture' Burke purposely uses a term of alchemy.

l. 16. **telling**, cf. p. 148, l. 2.

l. 17. **The elements**, etc. The most elementary text-book (catechism) on their favourite subject of metaphysics would have taught them that a complete list (troll) of the categories includes ten heads. The Aristotelian categories are the various predicates which may be affirmed of anything. Aristotle probably asked himself what assertions could be made of a given substance, *e.g.* man. The answer is—We can predicate of him, size or amount, quality, relation, that he is doing something, that something is done to him, that he is in a certain place, or at a certain time, that he is in a certain posture, and in a certain state. As I have explained on p. 204, l. 23, the French attended simply to number and quantity, leaving out of sight those qualitative differences which alone are of any importance.

l. 31. **unartificial**, unscientific : irregular : haphazard.

l. 33. **not of so much importance**, for the reason given on p. 39, l. 8.

P. 209, l. 2. **as well as it is**, besides being. The existence of influential men and classes is a check upon the action of a monarch. In the absence of a monarch, a society which has no natural leaders is a mere collection of impotent individuals, who must succumb to the first person that tries to tyrannize over them. Burke's prophecy was fulfilled by the establishment of the Napoleonic despotism. De Tocqueville points out that under the old régime the French had become so accustomed to see everything done by a central government, that they had entirely lost the idea of self-government. Their idea of freedom, therefore, was submission to an elected and constitutional government, instead of an hereditary or absolute one.

l. 13. **This is to play**, etc., this is a terrible risk to run.

l. 22. **chastised**, sober : kept within bounds.

l. 24. **They expect**, etc. In the setting up of their democratic system they have committed many crimes. They trust that it



## NOTES.

will not be destroyed when a despot returns, because they ~~just~~ that he will shrink from inflicting on France the horrors of a second revolution.

l. 29. M. de Calonne, a former finance minister.

l. 36. ways and means, see on p. 117, l. 8.

P. 210, l. 19. The representation. When a man is considered as a representative of the country and not of a part of it, the relative representation of the parts is a matter of no consequence.

l. 22. descriptions, classes of the people.

l. 28. to which it was pointed, Elected representatives do not constitute the government in England. They are only an element in the system of government. "The government is the point of reference," (p. 211, l. 4.) i.e. the members of the House of Commons sit to act as a control upon the administration in the interests of their constituents. Burke expresses the same view in his *Thoughts on the Present Discontents*, "The House of Commons was supposed originally to be no part of the standing government of this country. It was considered as a control, issuing immediately from the people, and speedily to be resolved into the mass from whence it arose." In the *Appeal to the Old Whigs* Burke says that "everything republican which can be introduced with safety either into England or France must be built upon a monarchy; built upon a real, not a nominal monarchy, as its essential basis; that all such institutions, whether aristocratic or democratic, must originate from the Crown, and in all their proceedings must refer to it; that by the energy of that mainspring alone those republican parts must be set in action, and from thence must derive their whole legal effect (as amongst us they actually do) or the whole will fall into confusion. These republican members have no other point but the Crown in which they can possibly unite."

P. 211, l. 11. When did you hear, etc., see note on p. 61, l. 35.

l. 15. it, viz. equality, or impartiality. Members of the House take special care that the interests of unrepresented districts shall not suffer.

l. 24. on different ideas, they desire greater purity in elections.

P. 212, l. 1. constitution-mongers, dealers in constitutions.

17. have the least interest, etc., i.e. the poorest classes.

P. 213, l. 3. Limbus Patrum, the region on the borders of hell. It was believed that the souls of the Jewish patriarchs abode in this region until Christ descended and rescued them and carried them into heaven. Men are for a time excluded from the Assembly just as the patriarchs were for a time excluded from heaven. See Dante's *Inferno*, canto iv. The word *Limbus* means properly *edge* or *border*. Their bottoms, The French apparently

think that a man becomes contaminated in the Assembly, and stands in need of purification, as a ship has to be cleaned after a voyage.

l. 7. chimney-sweepers, small boys were sent up chimneys with a brush to clean them. Just as they became expert, they had grown too big for the work.

l. 8. Superficial, etc., the future rulers of France will either be men who are just learning their work, or men who have once learnt it but have half forgotten it. petulant, beginners are always impatient, because they are ignorant of difficulties.

l. 9. ill, imperfect.

l. 10. Your constitution, etc., the constitution cannot be a good one, because the framers of it have been unwilling to trust any one. Instead of taking care to find men who will not fail in their duty, they have devoted their whole attention to contriving means of punishing those who do fail. Cf. "Every good political institution must have a preventive operation as well as a remedial. It ought to have a natural tendency to exclude bad men from government, and not to trust for the safety of the state to subsequent punishment alone: punishment, which has ever been tardy and uncertain: and which, when power is suffered in bad hands, may chance to fall rather on the injured than the criminal." —*Thoughts on the Present Discontents.*

l. 15. purgatory interval, time allowed for purification. According to the Catholic church the next world is divided into three regions—heaven for the good, hell for the bad, and purgatory, where those who are not bad enough for hell, and yet not good enough to be admitted at once into heaven, are sent for a time to be purified.

l. 22. when he solicits, etc., when he seeks re-election. As already explained on p. 202, l. 14, the voters would constantly change. Except at elections the inhabitants of France had no functions at all. The Assembly, when once elected, was absolute.

l. 30. cement, Burke uses again his favourite analogy of a building. Area was the original foundation of the constitution. Population and wealth were two buttresses. (P. 195, l. 12.) Cement is now found necessary to bind the departments together.

l. 31. Their confederations, etc., representatives of different towns or districts used to meet together and swear fidelity to the new constitution. An amusing account of these meetings is given in Carlyle's *French Revolution*, vol. ii. bk. 1, chs. 8-12.

l. 32. spectacles, Carlyle gives an account of a federation meeting held at Lyons. "From dawn to dusk it lasts; and truly a sight like few. Flourishes of drums and trumpets are something; but think of an 'artificial rock fifty feet high,' all cut into crag-steps,

not without the similitude of 'shrubs' ! The interior cavity, for in sooth it is made of deal, stands solemn, a 'Temple of Concord': on the outer summit rises 'a statue of Liberty,' colossal, seen for miles, with her pike and Phrygian cap, and civic column: at her feet a Country's Altar:—on all which neither deal-timber nor lath and plaster, with paint of various colours, have been spared. But fancy then the banners all placed on the steps of the rock; high-mass chanted; and the civic oath of fifty thousand: with what volcanic outburst of sound from iron and other throats, enough to frighten back the very Saone and Rhone; and how the brightest fireworks, and balls, and even repasts closed in that night of the gods !" Cf. "On July 14th, 1790, the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, a federation for the whole of France, at which the king presided, was held at Paris. Every department sent its deputation of national guards, who came to the number of 15,000 men. An altar was raised in the middle of the Champ de Mars, where Talleyrand, Bishop of Autun, said-mass, and blessed the banners of the departments. The thousands assembled swore with one voice to be faithful to the nation, the law, and the king. Louis, from his throne, took an oath to maintain the constitution, and the air resounded with shouts of 'Long live the King.' The Parisians entertained the visitors, and the day closed amid general light-heartedness and rejoicing. The Bastille was already razed to the ground, and crowds came to dance on the place where it had stood."—Mrs. Gardiner, *French Revolution*, p. 70. Burke means that such things as these would not keep the Departments together. Cohesion could only be produced by community of interests.

l. 36. *confiscation*, they thought that the Departments would be held together by a common interest in the redemption of the paper currency. See on p. 135, l. 23.

P. 214, l. 4. *head*, subject of consideration.

l. 11. *repulsion*, the opposite of *attraction*. If they don't carry the work of division and separation (p. 205, l. 6) so far as to make coherence impossible, the country will obey the Assembly until the paper currency is redeemed.

l. 13. *sufficient to support*, equal in value to.

l. 14. *morally certain*, as certain as a man can be in the absence of positive proof.

l. 15. *it will add, etc.*, There will be a general struggle, every man trying to secure land or money in exchange for the paper which he holds.

l. 19. *to sink*, to extinguish. If the value of the land is equal to that of the paper, all holders of paper will secure a material equivalent for it. When that is done, there will be nothing more

to be got by obeying the Assembly, and no one, therefore, will be interested in maintaining the constitution.

l. 20. **its binding force**, its power of holding the Departments together as mortar holds bricks together.

l. 22. **the credit of the paper**, the probability of obtaining something valuable in exchange for the paper.

l. 24. **direct**, foreseen and intended.

l. 36. **the influence of the bank**, By the Bank Charter Act of 1854 the Bank of England is required to keep an equivalent amount of bullion for all the notes it issues above £14,000,000; private banks established after the passing of this Act are forbidden to issue their own notes, and those established before are only allowed to do so under certain conditions. The Act was passed because it was thought that an unlimited power on the part of banks to issue notes encouraged speculation to a dangerous degree.

P. 215, l. 1. **He knows little**, etc., Those who can alter the value of money at will have an unlimited power over the well-being of the people.

l. 4. **more extensive**, because, as has been explained, there was more paper than specie.

l. 5. **depending on the managers**, In England a bank could not force people to use its notes. It could therefore only issue as many notes as people were willing to use.

l. 6. **member**, the literal meaning of the word is *a limb*.

l. 13. **money-jobbing and speculation**, the practice of buying shares or goods in the hope of selling them after a time at an advanced price, owing to an increase in the demand for them.

l. 23. **They have reversed**, etc., It was believed that Delos was originally a floating island, but that it was fixed in its place that Latona might give birth upon it to Apollo and Artemis. Land, which generally remains for a long time in the hands of one owner, is now to pass quickly from hand to hand in France. The words *oras et littora circum* are taken from a passage in which Virgil says that Apollo fixed the island of Delos.

“Long time the sport of every blast  
O’er ocean it was wont to toss,  
Till grateful Phœbus moored it fast  
To Gyaros and high Myconos,  
And bade it lie unmoved, and brave  
The violence of wind and wave.”—Æn. iii. 75.

l. 29. **to job out**, to sell at a profit. Their sole object will be to possess that form of property which at the moment happens to be of the greatest value.

l. 30. *holy*, ironical. The bishop referred to is the famous Talleyrand. He was a man of sceptical opinions and immoral life. He had entered the church unwillingly, but, being of good family, had risen to high rank in it. He had taken a prominent part in the measures for secularizing the church property. He was subsequently excommunicated by the Pope, and devoted the rest of his life to diplomacy.

l. 33. *an old farmer*, Burke farmed his own lands at Beaconsfield, his home in Buckinghamshire.

l. 34. *late lordship*, the reference is to the abolition of titles by the Assembly.

l. 35. *usury is not a tutor*, etc., cf. p. 137, l. 30.

l. 36. *according to the new dictionary*, i.e. as equivalent to atheistical.

P. 216, l. 3. *encouragement*, hopefulness.

l. 4. *I sow*, etc., The aged husbandman, asked for whom he is sowing, replies "for the gods, who willed that the fields should benefit not only myself but those who succeed me"—Cicero, *de Senectute*, vii. Burke adds the words "whilst Death held the other." Burke means that religion will teach the landowner that he has only a life-interest in his property, and that he is not so to exhaust it for his own benefit as to leave it a worthless possession to those who succeed him. Cf. p. 106, l. 3.

l. 7. *the two academies*, see on p. 123, l. 29.

l. 8. *Caisse d'Escompte*, the bank of discount. Cf. p. 135, l. 36.

l. 11. *Carthusian*, this order was founded in the 11th century in the district of *Chartreuse*, whence the name.

l. 14. *rural economy*, lit. the management of rural affairs.

l. 15. *too wise in their generation*, they understand their own interests too well. The expression is borrowed from the New Testament.

l. 21. *panegyric*, see on p. 151, l. 29.

l. 23. *Happy is the man*, etc., Horace in his second Epode puts a long description of the happiness of a country life into the mouth of a usurer named Alfius. In the four lines quoted below he describes how soon the usurer became tired of it, and returned to his own business.

l. 33. *cultivate the Caisse d'Eglise*, they will return to their business of speculating in church property. He uses the word *cultivate* because it is appropriate to vineyards and cornfields in the following line. The word 'cultivate' bears the general sense of 'to pay attention to.' The words *Caisse d'Eglise* mean, literally, the money box of the Church.

P. 217, l. 3. in everything new, who are innovators in everything.

l. 4. gaming, gambling. He has already explained that the maintenance of the constitution depends on the paper currency.

l. 8. extensive as life, because all payments were made in paper. Every transaction was a speculation, i.e. there was no certainty about it, because no man could tell the value of what he gave or received.

l. 15. the staple, the material.

l. 16. funds, used generally for *shares*. The Mississippi and South Sea Companies were formed in the eighteenth century, the one in France and the other in England. The profits were to be derived from a monopoly of trade in those regions: and it was proposed in each case to recompense government for the concession of the monopoly by a contribution from the profits to the repayment of the National Debt. Cf. p. 272, l. 18.

l. 20. lotteries, in Burke's time it was the practice to raise revenue by lotteries.

l. 22. countenances, cf. p. 18, l. 27.

l. 27. distemper, disease. Cf. p. 33, l. 26, and p. 218, l. 6.

l. 34. would, wishes to.

P. 218, l. 4. If you abstract it, etc., Men will only acquire paper on the chance that they may be able to sell it again at a profit. If they stored it up they would be like jackdaws who delight in the mere accumulation of what is of no use to them.

l. 11. conduct the machine, etc., control the issues of paper money.

l. 16. at par, at its nominal value.

l. 21. the murders, etc., in many places the mob killed men who were believed to be keeping back stores of corn in the expectation of a rise in price. See *Von Sybel*, vol. 1, p. 78.

l. 27. falling, used transitively. Cf. p. 219, l. 21.

l. 28. can take from or add, etc., viz. by increasing or diminishing the amount of paper money in circulation. The greater the debts of the government, the less is the likelihood that the government will be able to pay them. Every note is a promise to pay, i.e. it is a debt incurred. With every addition to the currency, therefore, the chance of redemption diminishes, and therefore the value of the money falls. Conversely its value rises with every contraction of the currency.

P. 219, l. 9. ephemeral, short-lived. It is a Greek word which signifies lit. 'lasting for a day.' It is easy by inventing a rumour to excite the passions of a multitude.

l. 19. **can ruin their property**, etc., the larger the amount of land that is offered for sale, the smaller the price that it will fetch. When, therefore, owners of land try to raise money by selling it, the managers of the church lands will offer land for sale at the same time, and so will diminish the amount of money which the landowners can realize.

l. 21. **he falls the value**, etc., the current price of a thing depends on the demand. When men wish to part with land and to obtain money, land will fall and money will rise in value.

l. 23. **by the very means**, viz. by the attempt to exchange his land for money.

l. 27. **legislatively proscribed**, as if a law had been passed which punished him by excluding him from the government. See on p. 117, l. 24.

l. 35. **they come embodied**, etc., because their habits have accustomed them to concerted action.

P. 220, l. 2. **monster**, an unnatural constitution. See on p. 75, l. 22.

l. 6. **an ignoble oligarchy**, cf. p. 139, l. 7.

l. 10. **Serbonian bog**, The reference is to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, 2, 592:

"A gulf profound as that Serbonian bog  
Betwixt Damietta and Mount Casius old,  
Where armies whole have sunk."

Damietta is a town in Egypt close to the easternmost mouth of the Nile. Mount Casius is further easterward on the Egyptian coast. The Serbonian bog is the Lake Serbonis.

l. 17. **playing about**, the metaphor is taken from the movement of a flame. In the *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* Burke says, "A system unfavourable to freedom may be so formed as considerably to exalt the grandeur of the state; and men may find in the pride and splendour of that prosperity some sort of consolation for the loss of their solid privileges. Indeed the increase of the power of the state has often been urged by artful men, as a pretext for some abridgment of the public liberty."

l. 22, **too deep**, etc., the reference is to the practice of sounding from a ship to discover the depth of water.

l. 26. **made their very virtues**, etc., the ruinous policy has been rendered possible by the support of men with a reputation for virtue.

l. 30. **strongly connected**, etc., because the paper currency was issued in Paris. De Tocqueville points out how, before the Revolution, the concentration of authority and the growth of manufactures in Paris had paved the way for the supremacy of that city.

P. 221, l. 9. the square republics, *sée* p. 194, l. 19.

l. 14. it has the whole draft, etc., the representatives from all parts of the country sit in Paris, and are subject to the will of the people of Paris.

l. 15. *hackled*, cut small. The deliberately planned disintegration of the country is described on p. 205, l. 22 *seqq.*

l. 33. the Checquer, one of the squares into which the surface of the country has been divided. The word would properly describe one of the squares on a chess-board. On p. 195, l. 2, he said the country resembled "a pavement of square within square."

l. 34. We begin, etc., *Cf.* p. 51, l. 18. *Cf.* "It seems that most persons are only capable of strong affections towards a few human beings in certain close relations, especially the domestic; and that if these are suppressed, what they will feel towards their fellow-creatures generally will be, as Aristotle says, 'but a watery kindliness' and a very feeble counterpoise to self love; and thus that such specialized affections as the present organization of society normally produces afford the best means of developing in most persons a more extended benevolence, to the degree to which they are capable of feeling it." Sidgwick, *Methods of Ethics*, bk. iv. ch. 3.

P. 222, l. 15. for the reasons, etc., see p. 214, l. 12 *seqq.*, and p. 57, l. 31 *seqq.*

l. 21. We see a body, etc., *cf.* p. 49, l. 30.

l. 25. legislative competency, what it is in the power of a legislative body to do. As an example of their exaggerated notions of their own authority see p. 170, l. 31. their examples, etc., *cf.* p. 18, l. 30, and p. 69, l. 20.

P. 223, l. 5. in the theory, etc., in any constitution that was ever planned, or that ever existed.

l. 21. your Solons and Numas, those who profess to do for France what the legislator Solon in the 6th century B.C. did for Athens, and what Numa, the second king, did for Rome.

l. 23. sovereign, used in its proper sense of *supreme*.

Pp. 223-231. *The King, who is to be the chief executive officer under the new system, has been so weakened and degraded that he cannot be an object of respect either to himself or others. He has no power over public measures. In the sphere of justice, he exists simply to register sentences, which he cannot modify, delivered by judges whom he does not appoint. In the sphere of administration, he has no power of rewarding service, but exists simply to enforce the observance of laws, which are passed without any reference to him. It is not to be expected that he will*



work with any zeal for an Assembly which has degraded him: or that his Ministers, if they have any respect for him, will obey the orders of those upon whom, a short time ago, they were sitting in judgment as rebels. It would have been better to get rid of the King altogether, and to appoint a new executive officer of whose fidelity and zeal they could feel assured. If the Ministers are friendly to the King, he and they will combine against the Assembly: if they are the creatures of the Assembly, they will strive in everything to thwart the King. They themselves are Ministers only in name. They cannot sit in the Assembly, so that they can neither initiate nor modify legislation; and if accusations are made against them, they can only defend themselves as culprits at the bar of the Assembly. Both King and Ministers are degraded in the eyes of Europe. Fear of punishment will prevent their breaking the laws, but it will not make them zealous upholders or administrators of them. The state must be weakened by the existence of a King, so long as a King exists. For whoever sits upon the throne will always be on the look out for an opportunity of becoming a King in reality again as well as in name. If, as it is said, the monarchy was retained only because the people insisted upon the retention of it, then it should have been made useful. Power, with the necessary safeguards for the rightful use of it, should have been given to the monarch, as in England. Because he has not the right of peace and war, for instance, France will be divided into parties intriguing in the interests of different foreign states. It is not wonderful that the Ministers, finding themselves in such an embarrassing and helpless situation, should have signified their intention of resigning.

l. 26. a degraded king, cf. p. 93, l. 6 seqq.

P. 224, l. 2. of intelligence, of conveying information. The English House of Commons depends for information upon the Ministers. They therefore largely influence the views of the House and the measures which are taken by the House. Parliament, of course, holds them responsible for the correctness and adequacy of the information communicated.

l. 15. a chief of bumbailiffs, etc., he appears to be at the head of the lowest class of the servants of the law whose business it is to serve warrants, to arrest culprits, and to execute the sentences of courts. The word *bun* is a contracted form of *bottom*, and bumbailiff means an under-bailiff. The word is said to have arisen from the pursuer catching at a man by the hinder part of his garment. catchpoles and sergeants-at-mace were, like bailiffs, officers whose business it was to arrest people. The word *mace* means a staff-of-office, a *chob*. In the *Present Discontents* Burke

depends on the necessity of having the administration correspondent to the legislature. Unless those who execute the law are in sympathy with those who make it, it is certain that the intention of the legislature will be frustrated. In England it is not enough that the laws should be made by the representatives of the people. They must also be administered by a Government in sympathy with and responsible to the people. George III. governed England absolutely through a subservient House of Commons and a puppet Ministry. Under him the Ministers were as insignificant as the King and his Ministers were under the French Assembly. Their function was simply to execute orders. They were treated with contempt by foreign courts, who soon discovered that they had no power. At home, they were hated when they carried out the unpopular commands of the court, and despised when they attempted a futile remonstrance. The position was one which no man of prudence or spirit could accept. It could only attract by its emoluments.

l. 18. *had been*, would have been.

l. 24. *It was not for nothing*, etc., it was with a definite object that they liberalized their hangman. See p. 78, l. 5.

l. 29. *It is not in nature*, etc., so long as men feel as they do, it is impossible that the king, etc. Cf. p. 227, l. 19.

P. 225, l. 7. *consideration*, respect.

l. 23. *he is to be spattered*, etc., the disobedient are to be shot down by his orders.

l. 24. *He has no negative*, he cannot veto any measures passed by the Assembly.

l. 29. *Executive magistracy*, etc., unless an agent loves and respects his master, he will not execute his orders with zeal.

l. 35. *fraudulent attentions*, this corresponds to the "literal but perverse and malignant obedience" in the preceding sentence. A man may defeat the intentions of his master in two ways, either by neglecting his orders altogether, or by acting on the letter of them in such a way as to violate the spirit of them. If a magistrate, when ordered to be on the watch against the spread of crime in his district, went out of his way to discover petty offences and punished every trivial fault with extreme rigour, he would obey the letter of his instructions, but he would make the law odious, and would encourage revolt against it.

P. 226, l. 1. *truly kings*, as opposed to those who, like the King of the French, are kings only in name.

l. 5. *Richlieu*, see on p. 53, l. 11.

l. 15. *chosen by affairs*, etc., they owed their election not to favouritism but to their fitness for the post. Burke means to say that kings will endure an obnoxious servant, but they will not

endure a master. Cf. "A great prince may be obliged (though such a thing cannot happen very often) to sacrifice his private inclination to his public interest. A wise prince will not think that such a restraint implies a condition of servility."—*Present Discontents*.

l. 31. a revolution in nature, cf. p. 224, l. 29. So long as men are what they are, no man will willingly serve those who were formerly his own servants.

l. 34. take up with, be satisfied with.

P. 227, l. 5. to have completed, etc., i.e. to have got rid of the King altogether. Cf. p. 80.

l. 13. creature, an officer whom they had themselves created.

l. 21. generous, see on p. 39, l. 34.

l. 34. short-sighted avarice, to those who see only the salary, not the discomforts, of the rank of Minister.

P. 228, l. 2. culprits, they must plead at the bar of an Assembly of which they are not members. English Ministers can defend themselves from their place in the House of Commons.

l. 5. But, the word introduces an imaginary objection to Burke's reasoning. The word responsible means 'liable to be called to account.'

l. 23. he will have no education, Cf. what Gibbon says of the Roman Emperor Honorius—"The experience of history will countenance the suspicion that a prince who was born in the purple received a worse education than the meanest peasant in his dominions; and that the ambitious minister (Stilicho) suffered him to attain the age of manhood, without attempting to excite his courage, or to enlighten his understanding," ch. xxix.

l. 26. genius, lit. a spirit. He will learn in some way or other.

l. 29. whilst you pique, etc. It is absurd to expect men to obey commands which run counter to human instinct and sentiment. 'To pique nature against you' means to enter into a contest with nature.

P. 229, l. 4. an economy, an arrangement. See on p. 180, l. 18.

l. 5. one real, etc., i.e. the Assembly, and the monarchy.

l. 7. Such a machine, etc., The monarchy is not worth what it costs to maintain it.

l. 10. Oh! but, Burke proceeds to answer an imaginary objector.

l. 16. heaven and earth, a common expression for 'everything.'

¶ 26. more necessary, he explains in ll. 31 *seqq.* why it is necessary.

l. 28. *auxiliary trusts*, such for instance as the execution of laws, the nomination to magistracy and office, etc. By 'the indirect correctives and controls which in England we have chosen' he means the power of Parliament to refuse to support government, until power is in the hands of persons who are acceptable to the people, or while factions predominate in the court in which the nation has no confidence. In the *Thoughts on the Present Discontents* he dwells on the evils which had resulted from the neglect of Parliament to exercise its power of control.

P. 230, l. 10. *M. de Montmorin*, he was minister for war at the time. When Spain applied to France for assistance in her dispute with England about Nootka Sound in California, parties in France were divided as to the answer which should be given. Lafayette was especially anxious to wound England, particularly by supporting the democrats in the countries subject to her or influenced by her. See *Von Sybel*, bk. ii. ch. 2.

l. 31. *are executed*, etc., see on p. 77, l. 9.

P. 231, l. 3. *to betray themselves*, they must be false to themselves, because they have to do what they are told to do, not what they believe to be right.

l. 8. *driven him from Versailles*, The King dismissed Necker, July 11, 1789, and ordered him to quit the country immediately. In a few days he was obliged to recall him.

l. 9. *multæ urbes*, etc., The quotation is from Juvenal, *Sat.* x. 284. When Pompey fell sick of a fever in Campania, the inhabitants of Naples and other cities offered up prayers for his recovery. He did recover, but Juvenal implies that it would have been better for him if he had died. For the remainder of his life he was unfortunate. If the French had not insisted on the recall of Necker, he would not as finance minister have seen the financial ruin of his country, just as Pompey, if the people's prayers for his recovery had not been answered, would have escaped defeat at the hand of Caesar and a violent death.

l. 13. *sitting on the ruins*, In the lines of Juvenal immediately preceding the passage quoted by Burke there is a reference to the Roman Marius. Burke's expression is suggested by the well-known story that Marius, having landed as a fugitive near Carthage, and being ordered by the Prætor to quit the province, replied to the messenger—"Tell the Prætor that you have seen Caius Marius in exile, *sitting among the ruins of Carthage*." As a matter of fact, Necker had resigned office before this Letter was published.

Pp. 231-236. *The Assembly, instead of reforming the old Parliaments as it ought to have done, has abolished them. The*

members of these old courts, being irremovable and independent, were a guarantee for the preservation of the law and the constitution, and for the security of the property of the subjects. Nowhere is the check of an independent judicature upon the government more necessary than in a democracy. Henceforth judges are to be elected by the inhabitants of their districts. Of course they will be partial to those who voted for them. The Parliaments might have been so reformed as to command the respect which the court of Areopagus commanded in Athens. They should have had a veto on the acts of the Assembly. This would have prevented capricious legislation. It is ridiculous to give to the King, who is the servant of the Assembly, a right to remonstrate against the orders of his masters. Until a new code of law is framed, the judges are simply to obey the instructions of the Assembly. In other words, they are to be mere agents of the government. This arrangement will lead to disturbances, for the people who have elected them will not allow them to enforce orders of which they disapprove. The Assembly has undertaken to frame a new and simple code of law. But, because it is simple, much will be left to the discretion of the judges: and, because it is new, they will have no experience to guide them in the exercise of their discretion. The administrative bodies, the members of which stand most in need of protection and control, are to be exempted from the jurisdiction of the courts altogether, and to be subjected directly to the Assembly. But the decisions of the Assembly are not legal decisions: nor is the Assembly likely to be very severe in its treatment of those who are its agents for the establishment of oligarchy. The High Court, which is to try cases of treason, seems likely to be a fearful instrument of tyranny. It will sit in fear of the mob of Paris to try cases got up by the Assembly.

1. 20. plan of judicature, "The new administrative divisions served as Judicial divisions also. The old courts, including the Parliaments, were one after another abolished. Each district was divided into cantons, and the primary Assemblies in each canton elected judges, called justices of the peace, for the trial of petty causes. Every district had a civil, every department a criminal court, of which the judges were respectively elected by the electors of the district and the department. Persons belonging to any branch of the legal profession were eligible as judges, who were elected for six years only. Much directly remedial legislation accompanied this new framework. Procedure was rendered more favourable to the accused. Trial by jury on the English system was adopted in criminal cases, every department having its grand jury. Securities were taken

against arbitrary arrest and imprisonment, and the law was made the same for all, without distinction of persons. A new penal code was drawn up which contrasted most favourably with the criminal law in force in other countries. Heresy and magic were no longer recognized as crimes. Torture was abolished, and the punishment of death confined to four or five offences."—*Gardiner*. Burke's criticism on this part of the work of the Assembly would be generally admitted to be too severe. Von Sybel, talking of the juridical measures passed by the Assembly, says truly, "that there is no department in which the favourable side of the Revolution is so strikingly seen, or so clearly distinguishable from its mistakes and faults." He points out, however, as Burke does, the evils of having judges elected by the people, instead of appointed by the crown. "The same party which chose the Directors of the District also designated the District judge; and both were equally impregnated by party spirit, equally dependent, and equally divested of all dignity and self-reliance. This one circumstance threw the whole progress of reform into jeopardy... France was soon to discover that her new judges hid their faces before every turbulent mob." Bk. I. ch. v.

1. 22. the parliaments, see note on p. 42, l. 6. Mackintosh's criticism on this passage is as follows:—"The judicial aristocracy formed by the Parliaments was even less susceptible of union with a free government than the Nobility and the Clergy were. Their spirit and claims were equally incompatible with liberty. They had imbibed a spirit congenial to the authority under which they had acted, and suitable to the arbitrary genius of the laws which they had dispensed; while they retained those ambiguous and indefinite claims to a share in the legislature, which the fluctuations of power in the kingdom had in some degree countenanced. The spirit of a corporation was from the smallness of their numbers more concentrated and rigorous in them than in the Nobles and Clergy; and whatever aristocratic zeal is laid to the charge of the nobility, was imputable with ten-fold force to the ennobled magistrates, who regarded their recent honours with an enthusiasm of vanity, inspired by that bigoted veneration for rank which is the perpetual character of upstarts. A free people would not form its tribunals of men who pretended to any control on the legislature. Courts of justice, in which seats were legally purchased, had too long been endured: judges who regarded the right of dispensing justice as a marketable commodity would neither be fit organs of equitable laws, nor suitable magistrates for a free state. It is vain to urge with Mr. Burke the past services of these judicial bodies. It is not to be denied that Montesquieu is correct when he states that under bad governments one abuse often limits another. The usurped authority of the Parliaments

formed, it is true, some bulwark against the caprice of the Court. But when the abuse is destroyed, why preserve the remedial evil? Superstition certainly alleviates the despotism of Turkey; but if a rational government could be erected in that Empire, it might with confidence disclaim the aid of the Koran, and despise the remonstrances of the Mufti. To such establishments let us pay the tribute of gratitude for past benefits; but when their utility no longer exists, let them be canonized by death, that their admirers may be indulged in all the plenitude of posthumous veneration." The same writer's criticism upon Burke's repeated remark, that the French ought to have reformed instead of abolishing the old corporations, is deserving of careful consideration. "Any gradual reform of them was impossible. They would have destroyed Liberty before Liberty had corrected their spirit. A slender reform amuses and lulls the people; the popular enthusiasm subsides; and the moment of effectual reform is irretrievably lost. No important political improvement was ever obtained in a period of tranquillity. The corrupt interest of the governors is so strong, and the cry of the people so feeble that it were vain to expect it... The gradual reform that arises from the presiding principle that is exhibited in the specious theory of Mr. Burke is belied by the experience of all ages. Whatever excellence, whatever freedom is discoverable in governments has been infused into them by the shock of a revolution: and their subsequent progress has been only the accumulation of abuses. The natural operation of tranquillity is to strengthen all those who are interested in perpetuating abuses. The National Assembly seized the moment of eradicating the corruptions and abuses which afflicted their country. Their reform was total that it might be commensurate with the evil; and no part of it was delayed, because to spare an abuse at such a period was to consecrate it; and as the enthusiasm which carries nations to such enterprises is short-lived, so the opportunity of reform, if once neglected, might be irrecoverably fled."

P. 232, l. 16. It ought to give, etc. Independent courts are a protection to the subjects against any attempts at tyranny by the government.

l. 30. It will be impossible, etc., Every verdict will be delivered with a view to catching votes at the next election.

l. 32. ballot, secret voting.

l. 36. partiality. It is bad enough that judges should be biassed against those who are known not to have voted for them: it is worse that they should be unfair to every one whom they may suspect of not having done so.

P. 233, l. 2. at so ruinous a charge, alluding to the pensions

which were paid to the members of them as a compensation for dismissal.

l. 5. **Areopagus**, This senate, originally composed of nobles, was one of the earliest institutions of Athens. The name is derived from "the hill of Ares or Mars," on which its sittings were held. It was a permanent Council, corresponding to the council of chiefs which modified the authority of kings in heroic times. "Its functions were originally of the widest senatorial character, directive generally as well as judicial. And although the gradual increase of democracy at Athens both abridged its powers and contributed still further comparatively to lower it, by enlarging the direct working of the people in assembly and judicature, as well as that of the Senate of Five Hundred, which was a permanent adjunct and auxiliary of the public Assembly—yet it seems to have been, even down to the time of Periklēs, the most important body in the state. And after it had been cast into the background by the political reforms of that great man, we still find it on particular occasions stepping forward to reassert its ancient powers, and to assume for the moment that undefined interference which it had enjoyed without dispute in antiquity. The attachment of the Athenians to their ancient institutions gave to the Senate of Areopagus a constant and powerful hold on their minds, and this feeling was rather strengthened than weakened when it ceased to be an object of popular jealousy—when it could no longer be employed as an auxiliary of oligarchical pretensions."—Grote, *History of Greece*, vol. iii. p. 73.

l. 13. as it must be, etc., because, as a judge is only elected for six years, he must be perpetually intriguing for votes at the next election.

l. 19. dissolved in 1771, The Parliament of Rennes instituted a process against the Duke d'Aiguillon for abuse of power during his administration of Brittany. The King transferred the case to Paris, but, as the Parliament of Paris seemed likely to deal with him even more severely than that of Rennes, the King stopped the trial. Upon this the Parliament of Paris declared the duke suspended from his privileges and functions as a peer. The King cancelled this decree, and the Parliament at once put a stop to the administration of justice. The Minister Choiseul, who had supported the Parliament, was dismissed. D'Aiguillon was made Secretary of State for foreign affairs. The magistrates, on refusing to resume their official duties, were removed from their posts and banished to different parts of France, and the ancient Parliaments both in Paris and the provinces were suppressed.

l. 27. squaring, bringing them into harmony with.

l. 31. **psephismata**, the Greek word for decrees. See the



passage from Aristotle quoted at the bottom of p. 139. Aristotle says that "demagogues make the decrees of the people override the laws, and refer all things to the popular assembly ... Further, those who have any complaint to bring against the magistrates say, 'let the people be judge'; the people are too happy to accept the invitation; and so the authority of every office is undermined."

P. 234, l. 4. This is to understand, etc., Burke means that a man must be either a servant or a master. He cannot be a mixture of the two.

l. 17. to supply, to fill the place of.

l. 31. to encourage, etc., ironical. They can see, by the example of the court of Chatelet, that they will have to suit their verdicts to the will of the mob. In confirmation of Burke's remarks, see Alison, *History of Europe*, vol. ii. pp. 184 and 190. Chatelet was the name of a prison.

l. 34. delation, a Latin word signifying *information*.

P. 235, l. 5. the actors, *i.e.* those who hang them.

l. 10. exploded, see on p. 28, l. 24. Their knowledge of the old law will not guide them in the interpretation of the new. Cf. p. 234, l. 16.

l. 24. King's-bench, The Court of King's (or Queen's) Bench—so called because the sovereign used formerly to sit there in person—is the supreme court of common law in the kingdom. It is the remnant of the Norman *aula regia*, or King's Court. Its jurisdiction is very high and transcendent. It keeps all inferior jurisdictions within the bounds of their authority, and may either remove their proceedings to be determined here, or prohibit their progress below. It superintends all civil corporations in the kingdom. It commands magistrates and others to do what their duty requires, in every case where there is no other specific remedy. It protects the liberty of the subject, by speedy and summary interposition. It takes cognizance both of criminal and civil causes.—*Stephen's Commentaries*, iii. 414-6.

l. 29. to oligarchy, see p. 220, l. 1 *seqq.*

l. 34. This is talking, etc. As the Assembly and the administrative bodies work each in the interests of the other, neither is likely to try the other.

P. 236, l. 5. a grand state judicature, the National Tribunal.

l. 8. the high court of justice, the court which was constituted to try Charles I. on the charge of treason. Lingard, *History of England*, vol. viii. p. 111.

l. 15. committee of research, a committee formed to arrest and frame charges against any one suspected of hostility to the Re-

volution would be as dangerous as the Catholic Inquisition, which could arrest and try all who were suspected of heresy.

1. 21. out of the republic of Paris, in Paris the court would be at the mercy of the mob.

Pp. 236-255. *The army is in open mutiny, and must soon rule the country. Mutiny was to be expected. The Assembly encouraged soldiers to rebellion and violence when it suited its purposes. It has taught the soldiers to disobey their titled officers by the doctrines of equality which it has preached, and upon which it has legislated. It has made the authority of the King a mere name. It now attempts to restore order by a repetition of useless decrees, by administering to the soldiers oaths which it has taught them to regard as a mockery, and by encouraging them to join in the festivities of the clubs in the districts where they serve. The very municipalities, with the members of which they are encouraged to associate, are themselves setting an example of lawlessness by usurping an illegal authority over the army. Such is the general confusion produced by its new arrangements that the Assembly is reduced to an attempt to cure anarchy by anarchy. In the social gatherings at the clubs, the soldiers will consort with the lowest class of the citizens, and each will corrupt the other. The soldiers' respect for military authority will be destroyed. Officers will have to coax instead of commanding their men. The officers themselves are to be appointed by the King, subject to confirmation by the Assembly. The Assembly will be divided into factions, each with its own favourites for promotion; while the whole body of officers will be divided into partisans of the King and the Assembly, according as they are indebted to the one or the other for their position. Promotion by seniority would not necessarily mean promotion by merit, while at the same time it would render the army less dependent upon any one. The troops will not obey a puppet King. They will despise him or pity him. Nor will they obey an Assembly of lawyers. The first soldier with a genius for command that arises will be their master, and the master of France. Meanwhile, when the right of every man to choose his own master is preached and allowed, when the right of soldiers to choose their own officers is discussed, and, in the case of the National Guard, conceded, the soldiers will not long consent to obey officers whom they have not chosen. The Assembly, which relies entirely upon the army for the preservation of order, has infused principles of insubordination into both army and people. It wishes to enforce the payment of feudal dues: the people reply by quoting its own condemnation of them, by disputing its authority, and by urging the injustice of governing*

*France in the interests of Paris. It is only for a time that the obedience of the army has been secured by flattery and increased pay. The municipal army, or rather the collection of local municipal armies, is a mere excrescence on the state.*

l. 26. cementing principle, see p. 214, l. 2.

l. 30. on good appointments, if it is properly equipped.

P. 237, l. 2. you are well circumstanced, ironical. He means that the Assembly is at the mercy of the army. 'To have the wolf by the ears' was a Roman expression to describe a man in a position of difficulty. He is unable to hold on, and afraid to let go. Some of the ideas contained in this passage are to be found in Montesquieu, *Esprit des Loix*, bk. xii ch. 6.

l. 14. It may enable us, etc., here again Burke shows his anxiety lest the example of France should be followed in England.

l. 19. the auspices, see on p. 35, l. 35. In confirmation of Burke's account of the state of the army the student may refer to Carlyle's *French Revolution*, vol. ii. bk. ii. : and to *Von Sybel*, bk. ii, ch. 3.

P. 238, l. 11. the colours, the regimental flag.

l. 12. *risum teneatis*, Burke means that it is laughable that a man should talk of the King as having any authority. The words are from Horace, *De Arte Poet.* v. 5.

l. 28. which has always ended, etc., e.g. in the case of the Roman empire the army entirely superseded the authority of both the emperor and senate. Cf. "Fierce licentiousness begets violent restraints. The military arm is the sole reliance; and then, call your constitution what you please, it is the sword that governs. The civil power, like every other that calls in the aid of an ally stronger than itself, perishes by the assistance it receives."—*Present Discontents*.

l. 36. *comices*, the Latin *comitia*, i.e. a meeting of the citizens of Rome for the election of magistrates, or the exercise of any of their political functions. He purposely introduces the word here and on p. 241, l. 11, to show that political power had passed into the hands of the French soldiery.

P. 239, l. 2. as far as its canvas admits, i.e. it is a complete description of the subject, so far as it goes.

l. 18. but too well, see on p. 87, l. 33.

l. 21. countenanced, see on p. 18, l. 27. the 6th of October, when the king was 'led in triumph.' See pp. 78, 9.

l. 22. the French guards, see note on p. 72, l. 16.

l. 32. doctors, used in its literal sense of 'teachers.'

P. 240, l. 10, the assembly itself, he said on p. 75, that the measures of the assembly were dictated by the mob of Paris.

l. 19. breaking, disbanding. Cf. 'to break (*i.e.* to dismiss) the officers,' p. 242, l. 31.

l. 20. decimating, punishing every tenth man.

l. 36. excellent sermons, the word 'sermon,' which signifies a discourse delivered in a church, is used ironically to describe an atheistical writing or discourse.

P. 241, l. 1. Voltaire and Helvetius, cf. p. 96, l. 2. Diderot and d'Alembert, were the chief organizers of the *Encyclopædia*. An oath is a mockery to a man who does not believe that there is a future life, or a God to punish him for a breach of his oath.

l. 5. a certain description of reading, etc., Carlyle remarks that the soldiers were readers of the newspapers, and that some of them wrote in them. •

P. 242, l. 29. requisition, the right of calling for the assistance of troops when necessary.

P. 243, l. 11. to pledge the assembly, cf. p. 117, l. 19.

l. 14. wear and tear, contact with or experience of. The expression is commonly used to signify the damage done to a thing by use.

l. 16. grand compounders, etc., the allusion is to an old practice in the universities of allowing a degree before the ordinary time to men who paid extraordinary fees. Just as these men obtained degrees without going through the requisite study, so the French profess to be politicians though they have not the experience requisite for their profession. In the next line he compares them to religious enthusiasts who believe themselves to be directly inspired by God. Here again Burke taunts the French with their ostentatious contempt for experience.

l. 25. his own relish, his own tastes or likings.

l. 28. deal in regeneration, cf. p. 192, l. 29. Burke says that he is too old to go to school again and undergo a training in the false philosophy of the French. The Latin passage which follows is slightly altered from Cicero, *de Senectute*, 23. In his *Letter to the Sheriffs of Bristol* Burke says, "I am too old, too stiff in my inveterate partialities, to be ready at all the fashionable evolutions of opinion."

l. 30. my grand climacteric, the 63rd year. The word signifies a critical period of life. Every 7th, 9th, and the 63rd year of a man's life were regarded as dangerous, especially the last.

P. 244, l. 5. You cannot propose, etc., Hé has shown that, if the King is at the mercy of the Assembly, the Assembly is at the mercy of the mob. If the army is disobedient to the Assembly, the municipalities are equally so.

l. 18. *affect*, used like the Latin *affectare* for 'to aim at' or 'desire.'

l. 29. *to cure the distempers*, etc., to cure the anarchy of the soldiers by mixing them with the anarchic municipalities.

l. 31. *a debauched interest*, so long as the municipalities entertain them at their clubs so long they will support the municipalities.

P. 245, l. 29. *puzzled*, perplexed : confused.

P. 246, l. 9. *bottom*, basis.

l. 23. *more independent*, because promotion will come by a fixed rule, without reference to the favour of anybody.

l. 34. *a debilitating channel*, viz. the King.

l. 36. *organ of false shew*, etc., the King is manifestly not what he is called. He is a king only in name.

P. 247, l. 10. *precarious*, see on p. 112, l. 18.

l. 16. *dominion of pleaders*, cf. p. 46, l. 24.

l. 20. *In the weakness*, etc., This prophecy was fulfilled by Napoleon.

l. 32. *came ... by*, became possessed of.

l. 33. *debauching*, seducing. We should not use the word in this sense now.

P. 248, l. 13. *permissive*, they hold their position only on sufferance.

l. 24. *another army*, the National Guard.

l. 31. *what is his new name*, when titles were abolished he was known as *Sieur Motier*.

l. 34. *curates*, see on p. 50, l. 17.

P. 249, l. 11, *doctors*, cf. p. 239, l. 32.

l. 16. *every thing depends*, etc., the citizens who have been taught that all men are equal will only yield obedience to force.

l. 31. *The colonies*, etc., There was a terrible outbreak in the sugar-colony of *San Domingo*. When the planters heard of the proclamation of the rights of men they began to assert their right either to independence or to representation. Afterwards the free black population and the mulattoes put forward the same claim, and, when it was refused, raised a revolt of the whole slave population.

P. 250, l. 5. *metaphysics*, used, as it is throughout the book, in the sense of abstract. The logical consequence of declaring feudal dues illegitimate is that no one should pay them. When the people draw and act upon this inference, they are coerced into payment.

- l. 15. to take fortresses, etc., See p. 239, l. 23.
- l. 22. guaranteed, sanctioned. We use the form 'to guarantee.' It is the same word as 'warrant.'
- l. 27. light, information. They are quick to point out grievances, but slow to remove them.
- l. 30. quit-rents, a quit-rent is a sum paid down once and for all to free a man from all dues and services.
- P. 251, l. 5. Romans or Gauls, the inhabitants of the country at the time of the Frankish invasion.
- l. 6. titles; cf. p. 21, l. 4.
- l. 14. subduer, he who clears it and makes it fit for cultivation.
- l. 17. duresse, constraint. The word signifies literally 'hardship.'
- l. 22. between an idler, etc., between a lay and an ecclesiastical proprietor. Below, l. 34, he calls the new lay proprietors "lay-monks." A cockade is a knot of ribbon worn in the hat. The National Guard first wore blue and red, the colours of Paris. White, the colour of France, was afterwards added. A cowl is a monk's hood. rochet is used loosely for 'the dress of an ecclesiastic.' Properly it signifies a particular robe worn by a bishop.
- l. 24. ground, base.
- l. 30. the succession, etc., land ought to descend from father to son in the families of those who cultivate it. The succession ought not to be regulated by legal documents and family settlements. The French word *substitution* is equivalent to our *entail*.
- P. 252, l. 1. When the peasants, etc., When they confront you with the false doctrines which you yourselves have taught them, you refuse to allow the force of them; and you reply to them by sending soldiers to compel obedience. Cf. p. 253, l. 21. The words "image and superscription," as applied to a coin, are borrowed from the New Testament.
- l. 5. second-hand, subordinate to the Assembly.
- l. 9. there are no gentlemen, Birth confers no privileges.
- l. 22 with their arms reversed, etc., The degradation of the nobles by the abolition of their titles is compared to the marks of disgrace which it was the custom to put upon a recreant knight. The impresses were the distinguishing badges upon their shields. The word *displumed* means literally 'stripped of their feathers'; and the phrase "unfeathered two-legged things," as a definition of man, is taken from Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, v. 170. Dryden borrowed it from Plato.

l. 27. we are not quite sure, Can a man be called the same man when his name is changed?

P. 253, l. 28. to follow up, etc., to push their doctrines to their logical conclusion, and to act in this case as they have acted in others.

l. 32. at market, for sale. For an explanation of the passage, see note on p. 219, l. 19.

l. 35. The only security, etc., They only allow the landlords to retain their property, because to give it to the peasants would be to diminish the selling value of the land which they have stolen from the church.

P. 254, l. 11. The old states, cf. p. 28, l. 24.

l. 15. the gabelles, the salt tax. See note on p. 77, l. 9.

l. 21. The last reason, etc., The Assembly has recourse in the first instance to force, which is employed by kings only as a last resource.

P. 255, l. 11. the systasis, Crete was split up into a number of independent city states, and Poland into a number of hostile factions, which were obliged to combine when threatened by a foreign foe. Burke means to say that France had been divided into eighty-three independent states, which certainly would not be welded into one by giving to each a separate army of its own.

Pp. 255-276. *A reform of the finances was the pressing want of France at the time when the States-general met. A state only exists so long as it is possessed of revenue: and it is in the collection and administration of revenue that the most ample field is afforded to the statesman for the display of ability and character. Experience has increased our knowledge of the principles of finance and of the ways of applying them, yet the French, in their financial measures, have not shown even the most ordinary ability or honesty. They have shown extraordinary skill in diminishing revenue. They have first declared taxes to be unfair, and have still insisted on the payment of them. Of course the people refused to pay taxes which had been officially declared to be unjustifiable. Those who refused to pay were not forced to do so. An unfair burden, therefore, was laid on the shoulders of the liberal and the patriotic. The government then had recourse to the futile device of calling for voluntary contributions, and being disappointed with the amount realized, they are trying to exact them by force. Next they had recourse to the plan, which had already been proved in their own history to be so mischievous and vain, of calling for patriotic donations. Such calls as these can, at most, only be*

made once, so that, even if they are successful now, there is no provision for revenue in years to come. What money there is in their Treasury is paper money which, just because it is forced, is valueless. At the same time that they have diminished their revenue, they have increased their expenditure. They are unable to borrow from foreign countries. Their one resource is in fresh issues of paper, which, of course, becomes more depreciated with every fresh issue. Those who attempt, as the French are doing, to obtain credit on the security of land, should at least be honest enough to state the net value of the security which they offer to their creditors. The French undertook to do this, though it is evident from the public accounts that the church lands, on the security of which they are now issuing notes, are already mortgaged beyond their value, and are still being mortgaged to meet new charges. The mob forces the Assembly to make fresh issues of assignats, and when the tax collectors try to make a profit by collecting the taxes in money and paying them to the state in paper, the Assembly attempts to give a value to its paper by declaring it to be equivalent to money. The whole proceeding is a petty fraud. They are now proposing to melt down their church bells for the mint. They are reduced to the tricks by which fraudulent bankrupts try to make it appear to the world that they have money. Meanwhile, even the inhabitants of Paris, to whose wants the whole of France is made to minister, are suffering the miseries of a besieged town. The rulers of France do not see that it is useless to discuss methods of raising revenue until public order is restored. Where there is anarchy, there is no security: where there is no security, there is no industry: where there is no industry, there is no wealth: and where there is no wealth, there can be no revenue.

l. 23. the states, cf. p. 38, l. 24.

l. 24. to enlarge its connection, to increase the number of those liable to pay taxes. See note on p. 134, l. 8.

P. 256, l. 1. The revenue, etc., This statement comes home to us in India. When government is asked to create new offices or institutions, or to assist or enlarge existing ones, how often is the reply given that the objects sought by the petitioners are desirable, but that government cannot afford the money!

l. 7. I had almost said, etc., because we can hardly know that they exist until they are manifested in action.

l. 11. conversant about, occupied with.



1. 20. **magnanimity**, this is shown in the avoidance of everything which is petty and mean.

1. 21. **fortitude**, this is shown in the resolute enforcement of what a government believes to be right and just. **tutelary**, lit. protecting, guarding.

1. 24. **in which the mind**, etc., all self-restraint involves a subjection of the passions to the rule of reason.

1. 28. **speculative and practical**, i.e. the rules by which the financier is to be guided, and the imposition of taxes in conformity with those rules.

1. 29. **which must take to its aid**, etc., it is evident that the financier, unless he is acquainted with the details of industry, cannot even tell where his taxes will fall. Unless he can follow the currents of international trade, he cannot properly adjust his tariff. Unless he can estimate the relative wealth of different classes, he cannot make the incidence of taxation just. History will instruct him as to the tendencies and results of economic measures. The contrivances of science will help him to efficiency and economy. The reader will easily supply other illustrations for himself.

1. 34. **and they will both**, etc., cf. "There is nothing which wisdom and prudence ought more to control than the proportion between what is taken from, and what is left to the subjects."—Montesquieu, *Esprit des Lois*, bk. xiii. ch. 1.

P. 257, l. 3. **And perhaps**, etc., as revenues grow and the necessity of raising them and making the most of them is more felt, we learn more of the conditions on which they depend. We are thus enabled by a skilful adjustment of taxation, to diminish the burden upon the taxpayers while increasing the amount raised in taxes. For instance, suppose that a slight tax upon capital is exchanged for a somewhat heavier one upon income. The latter is paid by a slight reduction of expenditure upon luxuries. The former involved a diminution of the fund from which the labouring classes are paid. Again, suppose that a tax is shifted from raw material to finished goods. The time which elapses between the payment of the tax and the recovery of it from the purchaser is diminished. The seller, in other words, has to advance money for a shorter time; he consequently requires a smaller sum as interest on what he advanced, and therefore sells the goods cheaper.

1. 15. **trying ... on**, judging by.

1. 21. **to make use of credit**, to borrow.

1. 33. **sterling**, measured in English pounds.

P. 258, l. 6. **Cedo qui**, etc. Quoted by Cicero, *de Senectute*, c. vi. 20, from a play by Nævius. Mr. Payne points out how exactly

applicable, in Burke's view, the passage was to the state of France. The passage in Cicero runs thus—"You will find that the greatest states have been brought to the verge of ruin by young men, but maintained and restored by old men. The question is raised, as it is in the play of Nævius, *How is it that you have so quickly brought to nothing that mighty state of yours?* Other answers are given to the question, but this is the chief, *There came to the front statesmen who were new to their work, foolish, and young.*"

l. 10. sophisters, see on p. 28, l. 20. declaimers, rhetoricians.

l. 13. monopoly of salt, See Introduction, pp. xvii.-xviii. For the conduct of the Assembly in regard to this and other taxes see note on p. 77, l. 9.

l. 28. declaration and violation, etc., because in one moment they declared that men ought not to be made to pay taxes which the next moment they ordered them to pay.

l. 32. compensating the provinces, i.e. the provinces who were now made for the first time to pay a part of the salt tax.

P. 259, l. 11. capital, see on p. 39, l. 15. Cf. "productive capital," l. 34. Burke says that those only were made to pay who were willing to pay.

l. 35. public spirit, cf. p. 147, l. 18.

P. 260, l. 6. John Doe...Richard Roe, these are two names used in law for the imaginary parties to a fictitious suit. They intend to supplement one fictitious resource by another equally fictitious.

l. 15. full-bottomed, descending low over the neck and shoulders. perriwig, the same word as the French *perruque*.

l. 16. frippery, worn-out clothes. See on p. 77, l. 29. The meaning is—they attempted to get out of their difficulties by a device which had long ago been tried and found wanting. Louis XIV. had tried it in 1709, when France was crippled by the long struggle with the Allies, and Louis XV. in 1762, towards the close of the Seven Years' War.

l. 28. desperate, cf. p. 71, l. 16.

l. 30. these toys, etc., No serious financier would think of raising revenue in such ridiculous ways. The word *supply* is used in its technical sense as equivalent to *revenue*.

P. 261, l. 22. fictitious representation, paper money which is supposed to represent wealth, but does not really. The land, on the nominal security of which the paper is issued, is already mortgaged to meet other charges.

l. 23. the representative, etc., the French only resort to paper money because they have no specie. In ordinary countries the existence of a paper currency is a sign that people believe in the

ability and the will of those who issued it to give specie for it when they are asked to do so. People receive it because they trust the issuers of it, not because they are forced to receive it whether they will or no, as the French are,

1. 30. but, except.

1. 35. **Change.** The Stock Exchange, a public meeting place for the transaction of business in London. in Westminster-hall, in Parliament. English commerce would not flourish if the English Parliament substituted by force a worthless paper currency for gold and silver.

P. 262, l. 4. ~~instead of lessening, etc.~~, It is evident, of course, that credit enables a large amount of ~~wealth~~ to be employed productively which, in the absence of credit, would lie idle. All great public works, such as railways, are constructed with borrowed money. Bankers invest a large proportion of the sums that are deposited with them. In the dealings of private traders, their credit is as good as money.

1. 11. Well! But, Burke proceeds to answer an imaginary objector.

1. 16. the expenses, viz. the salary paid to the members. On this and similar passages Mackintosh remarks that "Mr. Burke's calculations are taken from a year of languishing and disturbed industry, and absurdly applied to the future revenue of peaceful and flourishing periods;—from a year in which much of the old revenue of the state had been destroyed, and during which the Assembly had scarcely commenced its new system of taxation. Calculations cannot fail of being most grossly illusive which are formed from a period when many taxes had failed before they could be replaced by new imposts, and when productive industry itself, the source of all revenue, was struck with a momentary palsy. Mr. Burke discussed the financial merits of the Assembly before it had begun its system of taxation. Nor is it correct to say that the Assembly destroyed the former oppressive taxes, which formed so important a source of revenue. They perished in the expiring struggle of the ancient government. No authority remaining in France could have maintained them."

l. 20. have been cruel, as, for instance, in their treatment of the clergy. They have robbed some, and dismissed others, but they have not saved money by their cruelty.

1. 25. chargeable, burdensome.

P. 263, l. 19. ~~the~~ medium, the kind of money with which he shall pay his debts.

1. 20. discharging, etc., the French pay their debts with assignats, which are themselves only promissory notes.

l. 21. his very penury, rags, out of which paper is made, are the symbol of poverty. So Carlyle says, "While old rags last, there shall be no lack of circulating medium: whether of commodities to circulate thereon, is another question."—*French Revolution*, vol. ii. bk. 1, ch. 2.

l. 23. Their fanatical confidence, etc., Their mad confidence that by the sale of the church lands they will realize as much as they can possibly want.

l. 25. the philosopher's stone, by which the alchemists expected to turn all metals into gold. Alchemy is called the *hermetic art* because the invention of it was attributed to a mythical person named *Hermes*. The word *medicine* which Burke uses in l. 29 was a synonym for the philosopher's stone, or the elixir of the alchemists. Cf. "It is a thing more probable that he that knoweth well the natures of weight, of colour ... and the rest, may superinduce upon some metal the nature and form of gold by such mechanic as longeth to the production of the natures afore rehearsed, than that some grains of the *medicine* projected should in a few moments of time turn a sea of quicksilver or other material into gold."—Bacon, *Adv. of Learning*, l. viii. 3. Cf.

"How much unlike art thou Mark Antony!  
Yet, coming from him, that great *medicine* hath  
With his tinct gilded thee."

—*Antony and Cleopatra*, i 5. 35.

The word mummy signifies properly the liquor which exudes from embalmed bodies, and was used medicinally.

l. 30. do not believe, etc., Referring to the fashionable disbelief in Christianity, Burke says that the payment of the enormous debts of France out of the property of the church would be as great a miracle as any recorded in Scripture.

l. 36. freehold, a property which belongs to a man absolutely. Their offices were to them a valuable possession, of which no one had a right to deprive them. in, means in the shape of: cf. "estates in offices," p. 289, l. 3.

P. 264, l. 17. Mais si maladie, etc., The words are taken from one of the interludes of the play called the *Malade Imaginaire*, in which Molière satirizes the doctors of the time by a ridiculous description of an examination of a candidate for the degree of M.D. The examination is conducted in a mixture of mutilated French and dog-Latin. The candidate is asked in succession what are the proper remedies for a number of diseases. To every question he gives the same answer—"To give a clyster, next to bleed (*seigner*), then to purge."

l. 30. the sole security, cf. p. 126, l. 18.

l. 33. *pious and venerable*, ironical. The reference is to Talleyrand. Cf. p. 215, l. 30.

l. 34. *by anticipation*, etc., he is regarded as an authority even in his own lifetime. See note on p. 124, l. 18. For Bossuet, who is mentioned in the footnote, see on p. 163, l. 11. The French writer La Bruyère was born in 1644 and died in 1696.

P. 265, l. 2. *comptroller-general*, see on p. 127, l. 17. Talleyrand is described as the administrator of the confiscated revenues of the church.

l. 6. *the Fisc*, the National Treasury. See on p. 112, l. 22.

l. 8. *a real fund of credit*, good security for what they borrowed.

l. 10. *To establish*, it is difficult for a company, whose property is in land, to obtain credit in the shape of securities which shall be readily accepted and pass freely from hand to hand. I have already explained that the assignats of the French government professed to be exactly like the notes of a bank, except that they were issued on the security not of specie but of the church lands. In Macaulay's *History of England*, chs. xx., xxi., and xxii., will be found an account of an attempt made to establish a Land Bank in the reign of William III.

l. 13. *through a contempt*, etc., after committing the sin of robbing the church, they were led to adopt a method of borrowing which experience had shown to be disastrous.

l. 20. *the recovery*, etc., the repayment of the creditors.

l. 24. *the supply*, etc., the payment of state officials, etc.

l. 29. *the encumbrances*, the payments which had to be made out of the profits of the estates. For example, a son often inherits his father's estate on condition of paying a yearly sum to the widow so long as she lives. This yearly payment is an *encumbrance*. The pensions of the dismissed clergy and members of the Parliaments were encumbrances on the church property. The *net* value is what remains to the owners after paying all the charges of maintenance and all encumbrances.

l. 33. *properly vested*, etc., if the control of the land is not taken out of the hands of the mortgagers they may defraud their creditors by selling it, or by mortgaging it again to fresh creditors.

l. 35. *he would admit*, etc., he would either obtain an advance of money, to be repaid on the sale of land: or he would induce people to take his paper in the place of money, on condition that the paper would be redeemed when the land was sold.

P. 266, l. 12. *clear*, equivalent to *net*.

l. 25. *the R. C. A. religion*, by the new constitution of the church

the metropolitan or bishop was forbidden to exact from the new bishops or curés "any oath other than that they profess the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion."—Taine's *French Revolution*, bk. ii. ch. 2.

l. 27. *secular*, etc., see on p. 162, l. 31.

P. 267, l. 4. *immoveable estates*, the lands and the buildings as opposed to the moveable effects, such as furniture, instruments, and implements of all kinds, etc.

l. 5. *inventory* is the technical word for a catalogue of moveables.

l. 14. *manly*, ironical.

l. 16. *indulgences*, the indiscriminate issue of paper money is compared to liberal issues of *pardons* on receipt of money by Popes to Catholics.

l. 22. *discovery*, used in its literal sense of *disclosure*.

l. 24. *They rob*, etc., they confiscated the church lands in order to issue on the security of them paper which they knew they could not redeem. They have now revealed their fraud to the world by publishing accounts, which show that these lands are already mortgaged beyond their value for other purposes than the redemption of the paper.

l. 35. *the religious*, etc., those who have taken the three vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience.

P. 269, l. 1. *the bottomless resource*, cf. p. 263, l. 23.

l. 4. *colour*, show of justice. Cf. p. 129, l. 6.

P. 270, l. 5. *can plant*, i.e. can enter into possession of.

l. 13. *to swallow down*, etc., to submit to successive issues of assignats.

l. 24. *an hundred thousand*, etc., the Assembly is overawed by the mob.

l. 26. *metaphysic*, see on p. 207, l. 8. The opinion of a few experts is of more value than the vote of the largest mob.

l. 30. *the club at Dundee*, the members of which called themselves the "Friends of Liberty."

P. 271, l. 25. *having iron*, etc., viz. the soldiers, who, finding that though they nominally received more money, the purchasing power of the money had diminished, would naturally resent the imposition.

P. 272, l. 2. *an alien*, opposed to the interests of. To receive the paper was to impoverish the treasury: to reject it was to proclaim its worthlessness to the world.

l. 3. *amulets*, charms. The word is naturally applied to paper supposed to possess "a secret nutritive virtue."

l. 11. **proof**, fitted to test the faith. The words used are appropriate to, describe the authoritative enunciation of a religious dogma by an ecclesiastical council. That paper is equal in value to gold is just as repugnant to reason as any of the dogmas of religion.

ll. 12, 13. For **anathema**, see on p. 14, l. 18, and for **fathers**, see on p. 124, l. 18.

ll. 13, 14. **Credat Judæus Apella**, Horace, *Sat.* l. v. 140, uses these words in the sense of "none but the most superstitious would believe it." Conington translates it—"Tell the crazed Jews such miracles as these!" As **Jew** is synonymous with money-lender, what Burke means is that nobody who knows anything about money will believe the assertion made by the Assembly.

l. 17. **Mr. Law**, the author of the Mississippi scheme. See on p. 217, l. 16. The French leaders resent any comparison between themselves and Mr. Law. They assert that the shares of his company were not backed by such good security as their assignats are. The use of the words *sand* and *rock* to describe a weak and a solid foundation is suggested by one of Christ's discourses recorded in the New Testament:—"Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sands; and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it"—*Matt.* vii. 24; and by the saying of Christ to St. Peter, "Thou art Peter (Greek *petra*, a rock) and upon this rock will I build my church." Similarly Bacon says, "Although the human foundation hath somewhat of the sands, yet the divine foundation is upon the rock."—*Adv. of Learning*, 2. xxiii. 46.

l. 20. **glorious**, boastful, like the Latin *gloriosus*.

l. 21. **ground**, notice the appropriateness of the word. The assignats were based upon the lands of the church.

l. 23. **mother fraud**, of which all subsequent frauds were merely copies.

l. 27. **the farms**, etc., the contracts. To farm the revenue means to leave the collection of it to an individual in consideration of a lump sum paid down by him.

l. 31. **generous**, see on p. 39, l. 34. The idea of making the old and new worlds contribute to the prosperity of France was a noble idea, fitted to attract a lofty imagination.

P. 273, l. 2. nuzzling, going with the nose down. Cf.

"The blessed benefit, not there confined,  
Drops to a third who nuzzles close behind."  
Pope, *Epil. to the Satires*, dial. ii.

l. 11. enlightened, ironical. The allusion, of course, is to the fact that the paper currency was made compulsory. The reader will notice the irony of the following paragraph.

l. 19. alchemy, see on p. 208, l. 10.

l. 24. drawing and redrawing, issues and renewals of promissory notes. To *renew* a bill means to get the time for payment extended.

l. 25. the evil day, the day on which payment must be made, or the inability to pay be declared. on the play, etc., the government pretended to borrow from and to make repayments to the Bank of Discount. But no actual payments in money were made on either side, as the state was largely indebted to the Bank of Discount, which would have been ruined by a declaration of National Bankruptcy. The notes of the bank, therefore, were worth no more than the assignats of the state.

l. 26. exploded, see on p. 28, l. 24.

l. 31. their airy speculations, cf. p. 208, l. 1.

P. 274, l. 2. to value, to pride themselves. Cf. p. 275, l. 17.

l. 12. panegyric, see on p. 151, l. 29.

l. 19. Henry the Fourth, see on p. 53, l. 11. Upon the death of Henry III., Henry IV., being a Protestant, was recognized as king only by a portion of the army. He was opposed by the League, and only obtained possession of his kingdom by professing the Catholic religion.

l. 24. Mr. Bailly, the reference is to the letters written by him on the subject of the fabled island of Atlantis. For the quotation which follows see *Par. Lost*, 10. 293,

"The aggregated soil  
Death with his fince petrific, cold, and dry,  
As with a trident smote."

l. 31. the period, etc., the month in which the Bastille fell is a month never to be forgotten.

P. 275, l. 6. Paris rules the subject departments as Rome ruled the subject provinces of her empire. The inhabitants of an imperial city of which the government is democratic will always make the provinces maintain them. When, as in Rome, the republic is supplanted by a despotism, the despot can only maintain himself in power by conciliating the inhabitants of the city. The provinces, therefore, are still as before made to main-



tain the inhabitants of the ruling city, and, in addition, they are subject to the exactions of the despot.

l. 22. *contribution, taxation.*

l. 25. *To keep a balance, etc., cf. p. 256, l. 34 seqq.*

l. 28. *The means, etc., a man must be in a position to make money before he can pay money.*

l. 34. *rooted out, etc., as they are when men are taught that all men are equal. With what follows cf. p. 40, l. 27 seqq.* Whoever weakens the belief of the poor that the inequalities of this life will be redressed in another world, makes them discontented and idle here, and tempts them to redress the inequality here by robbing those who are better off than themselves.

P. 276, l. 14. *tontines*, a tontine is an annuity on a group of lives. As the annuitants die off, the annuity is paid to the survivors. The name is derived from that of the inventor of the scheme, Laurence Tonti, a Neapolitan. An annuity is a yearly income received in consideration of a lump sum which has been advanced by the recipient. It represents the consideration paid by the state for a loan. Burke means that before considering whether it shall obtain the use of money by loans, or by issuing paper, or by getting advances from individuals or groups of individuals, or by letting its property, the government must take care that the existence of money at all is possible.

l. 15. *wares of the shop*, tricks of the trade: devices of professional financiers. The reader should notice how Burke insists throughout that *foresight* and *comprehensiveness of view* are essential to statesmanship.

Pp. 276—end. *The name of liberty will not make up for all the evil that has been done in France. Mere liberty is but another name for license. It is good to talk and think of liberty; it is good to have the power of conciliating the people. But liberty must be combined with control, and popular leaders must remember that they are in danger of becoming the tools of the people whom they aspire to guide. Those who supplant an old system by a new one naturally destroy something bad and substitute something that is good. But the good which the French have done is as nothing in comparison with the evil. Let the English people take warning! Let them remember that it is their own fault if they do not live happily under their own constitution! Let them shun changes which are unnecessary, radical, or rash! When the period of revolution is over, and some permanent form of government is established, a French reader may perhaps profit by Burke's philosophy of conservatism. He is at least zealous for the cause of freedom, and what he has written is the result of honest and unbiassed reflection.*

l. 32. It is the greatest, etc., with this passage cf. pp. 7-9.

P. 277, l. 3. They warm the heart, etc., they stir our feelings, they make us think less of ourselves and more of the claims of others: in times of conflict they keep us in mind of the value of that for which we are fighting.

l. 5. Old as I am, cf. p. 72, l. 1.

l. 6. The Roman poet Lucan in his *Pharsalia* deplores the destruction of Roman freedom which was completed by the victories of Cæsar over Pompey. Corneille, a French dramatist, was born in 1606, and died in 1684.

l. 10. they diffuse, etc., occasional efforts to please are a welcome relaxation of the habitual austerity of the strictly virtuous man.

l. 12. the graces, in the old mythology, represented beauty, refinement, and gentleness. Burke means that every politician should cultivate the art of pleasing.

l. 19. to temper together, to weld into one.

P. 278, l. 20. the states, cf. p. 38, l. 24.

l. 33. to their own conduct, for an illustration of this see note on p. 229, l. 23.

P. 279, l. 10. a moral, etc., fear of doing wrong, as distinguished from cowardice. complexional, means constitutional.

l. 15. He that had made them, etc., God rewarded them with success because they acted with the caution that befits fallible creatures.

l. 22. the aéronauts, the adventurous politicians.

l. 29. one of our poets, Addison. The quotation is from his *Cato*.

P. 280, l. 5. the endeavours, alluding to the proceedings against Warren Hastings.

l. 14. would preserve, see on p. 7, l. 29.

l. 17. is desirous of carrying, etc., wishes to preach a philosophy of order to a people which is in danger of being ruined by anarchical theory and policy.

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which follow Burke explains that in their reasonings they failed to appreciate the moral value of the feelings. An instance of sophistry is the identification of regicide and parricide with common homicide: p. 86, l. 12. *economists*, lit. men who are careful in their expenditure. In old days men did not expect to be paid for their services to king and country. Henceforth to do a service without receiving a reward will seem like extravagance. In all that they do men will *calculate* whether what they get is worth what they give. On p. 86, l. 22, he says that there will be no disinterested patriotism. Men will only support the laws in so far as, by so doing, they will further their own ends. They will not sacrifice their private interests to those of the state.

l. 35. *the glory of Europe*, See p. 85, l. 17.

P. 85, l. 1. *generous*, See note on p. 39, l. 34. Burke means that there is nothing *servile* in an obedience and a respect which are accorded willingly. So on p. 85, l. 33, he talks of a '*liberal*, i.e. not servile, obedience.' The words *proud* and *dignified* also signify that a man cannot feel any sense of degradation in willingly obeying another because he loves him.

l. 2. *subordination of the heart, loving obedience*. A long course of oppressions enforced by mere terrorism stamps out the very thought of resistance, and renders men unfit to be anything but slaves. But nothing can diminish the self-respect and independence of those who submit to oppression, not because they are afraid to resist, but because they love their oppressors too much to think of resisting them. The meaning is explained on p. 40, l. 1. 'You were not enslaved through any illiberal or servile disposition.'

l. 4. *grace of life*, On p. 86, l. 2, Burke argues that sentiment veils the hideousness of human passion: and on p. 86, l. 21, he argues that a contempt for sentiment shows a want of refinement. The comeliness which feeling gives to the character of men and to their mutual relations is *unbought*, in the sense that feeling is spontaneous.

l. 5. *the cheap defence*, the safety of the country is secured by the disinterested patriotism of the citizens. The words *unbought* and *cheap* emphasize the folly of the French in throwing away what not only cost them nothing, but even saved them something. *manly*, used in the same sense as on p. 7, l. 27.

l. 7. *principle*, see note on p. 70, l. 18. Men had a delicate sense of honour. They shrank from wrong-doing as a man shrinks from bodily pain. *chastity of honour*, a strong expression. They guarded their honour as a woman guards her virtue.

l. 8. *it mitigated ferocity*, Their courage sprang from sympathy with distress, from loyalty, or from a sense of wounded honour.

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